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THE STORIES OF  
THE RUSSIAN BALLET.











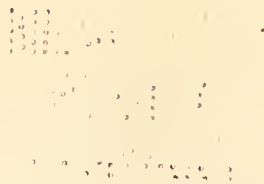
*Bert*

*Paris*

*L'amour nous réunira.*

THE  
STORIES OF THE  
RUSSIAN BALLET

ARTHUR APPLIN.



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1907  
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*Bert*

*Paris*

À  
MICHEL FOKINE  
ET À  
CHACUN DES MEMBRES DU BALLET  
IMPÉRIAL RUSSE.

LES roses n'ont point besoin de guirlandes.  
Néanmoins j'ose poser à vos pieds mon petit bouquet,  
sachant trop combien il est indigne de vous et pourtant  
attiré par votre gracieuseté.

Mes paroles auraient même des ailes qu'elles ne réussiraient pas à vous suivre dans vos essors, ni à décrire les palais d'enchantements que vous avez érigés. Je ne fais pas d'excuses, je ne vous offre pas d'apologies. J'ai raconté les histoires que vous décrivez par l'intermédiaire de votre art exquis, non pas pour ceux qui ont des yeux et ne voient pas, des oreilles et n'entendent pas, mais pour ceux plus heureux qui ont pu voir et entendre et qui voudraient peut-être garder un souvenir, quelque indigne qu'il soit, des danseurs russes.

Il en est d'autres encore que la force des circonstances a privés de cueillir les fleurs de délices par vous répandues sur les chemins sombres de notre civilisation moderne.

Il se peut que pour eux ces historiottes ne soient pas tout à fait sans charme.

A vous je ne peux offrir que ma main et mon cœur. Je vous prie tous de vouloir accepter l'une et l'autre.

ARTHUR APPLIN.

*Londres, 1911.*









*Bert*

*Paris*

## FOREWORD.

PROBABLY the first thing the first man and woman did when they became conscious of themselves and of the earth that was theirs, was to dance. It is the most primitive and the most exalted of all the arts and graces. It is allied to the greatest art. The human voice which is music—and than music humanity possesses no thing more beautiful—can only be heard. Dancing, which is music, can be seen. When we dance to sound, produced either by human or by mechanical agency, we hear and see and feel music.

In English villages folk used to dance, but it has ever been a pastime not an art, and of late years it has almost if not entirely disappeared. These uncomfortably intelligent people from a vast continent washed by the very waves that guard our eastern coast, may revive for us—not a lost art, we are too civilised for that—but a pleasant and necessary pastime. Necessary, because no nation can exist or has existed which does not know how to be happy and give expression to happiness.

A nation which is joyless cannot build or create or fight. France, who in the last century has suffered unspeakable terror, bloodshed and poverty, is still doing all three, because, though possessing nearly all the vices known to nations, she still insists on being happy, and knows the value of happiness.

On fête days in every street corner in every quarter of her capital you will see people dancing and hear them making music. Even Germany, in spite of her people being almost strangled by red tape and suffocated beneath an avalanche of

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uniforms and armaments, still insists on joy; and she has her Bacchanalia of music.

It requires but little imagination to picture a regiment of Russian Cossacks doing a wild dance before going into battle, or in celebration of victory. A little more imagination, and we can see a company of French Chasseurs laughing and leaping in the air: still a little more and the Fifth Uhlans' is celebrating the glory of Bloodshed.

But can anyone outside Hanwell picture a detachment of our English Guards behaving so indecorously?

True, they waltzed before Waterloo and with the Germans won the battle. But after Africa we, stay-at-home soldiers, became drunk—there was some excuse for that, I admit, which is best forgotten. The English people are forced to the public-house for their Bacchanalia. To dance on the village green on the Sabbath would be to desecrate it. To dance down Piccadilly would mean a night in the police cell and a dull morning with an unimaginative magistrate.

It is interesting to notice how the rise and fall of the dance has accompanied the rise and fall of great nations. It has ever been the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, of the health and happiness of a virile people. In ancient times the dance was an expression of Religious, patriotic or military feeling. The Choric and Pyrrhic dances are examples. And do not let us forget when we object to an artist dancing before the (property) head of John the Baptist at Covent Garden, that David danced before the Ark of the Lord. But of course the solemn character of dancing has declined with the progress of civilisation.

Men and women must have their Bacchanalia, and when Bacchus is driven from the fields and forests—or from the

theatres and dancing halls, the playgrounds of the city—into the sawdust-covered floor of the public-house and the gin palace, then beware.

As an expression of the joy of life, the glory of existence and the beauty of the human body the work of the Russian dancers is perfect. There is no emotion they cannot and have not expressed for us with the music of feet and hands, limbs, eyes and lips. They can as easily rouse terror in our souls as laughter in our hearts. They can fling us to the very depths, or at a bound, bird-like, carry us to heights we scarcely dare dream exist.

At first the magnificence, the strangeness and the glory of it all upset our mental equilibrium, swept us off our solid British feet like a wave from an ocean of unplumbed depth. Thinking afterwards, more calmly and quietly, of what we saw and heard, we felt as if we had witnessed a miracle.

Some, perhaps, were frightened; for they can be terrifying, these barbarians from the land where east and west touch hands and lips.

Others may feel their senses have been outraged. For we have been so carefully nurtured, so engrossed in the counting house, so doggedly determined to express nothing that we feel and to feel nothing that we express, that when these Russian dancers filched the last garment from the rag doll of Respectability which we have set up in our midst to worship, and laughing, threw the dust in our faces, replacing it with flesh and blood and brain, no wonder we shuddered and felt alternately fear and shame and delight.

Civilisation will, if there be a day of judgment, have much to answer for; and not the least of these, collars and trousers, corsets and legless women.

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The spirit of youth was a long time reaching London. It is easier to bridge the Atlantic Ocean than the English Channel. More dreams have been drowned in that narrow stretch of salt water than the combined oceans of the universe. Napoleon overcame the Alps, but even he could not cross from Calais to Dover; and when we had the misfortune to make him a prisoner, not the Channel Islands, but St. Helena his resting-place.

To the Director of an ordinary British music-hall belongs the honour of having successfully accomplished what the Press is pleased to call "The Russian Invasion." We wonder now if he was frightened at his temerity.

Karsavina at Charing Cross. Pavlova in Shaftesbury Avenue. It really sounds quite dreadful. If they had arrived two years later with Monsieur Peter, an Agent Provocateur of a secret police, one can imagine Scotland Yard requesting that the Guards should be called out, or the Lord Chamberlain hurrying with a maxim gun and an ultimatum to St. Martin's Lane.

For the unknown to be successful in London it is always necessary to create what is called a boom. Marvellous clothes or the lack of them; a terrifying top note; a tame lion; a Star that has been shining with unparalleled brilliance in another city. But we were told nothing about the Russian dancers when they arrived in 1909—some half dozen of them only—and so we expected nothing. And it is to be feared that some of us found what we expected. Now, two years later, we are slowly opening our eyes.

It is true there was a printed slip in the programme which told us that these dancers had been the rage of Paris.

But then, Paris!

There were a few lines inserted describing the work of



Karsavina and Kosloff, and the management, with devilish forethought, threw on a white screen, through the medium of a magic lantern, an explanation and description of each dance before it was performed. So we had no excuse for not understanding, had we? Like children at school the lesson was carefully explained to us.

It may be interesting to give a list of the dancers who made the vanguard of the great company which this year has filled the stage—and the auditorium—of Covent Garden. The first we remember, and she would be the last to be forgotten, did we not possess the virtue of at least being faithful to those we have learnt to appreciate—is Tamara Karsavina.

And there quickly followed her, to the Palace Theatre in 1910, Anna Pavlova.

There is no need to describe either Karsavina or Pavlova. If there were, indeed, pen and ink would be incapable of the task, for they both typify and express the woman of all ages, and ageless.

And if this little book should fall into the hands of one whose only interest in art is to have revealed the private life of his favourite artist, the clothes she wears, the food with which she nourishes her body, the number of hours she spends in relaxation and sleep and the secrets of her toilet and heart, he will be well advised to cast it from him at once. For it only contains pen portraits, all unworthy, of the Dancers and their Art. The reflection of the soul rather than that of the mirror.

The first thing of which we are conscious when Karsavina appears upon the stage is youth. Realisation of her beauty comes more slowly. Perhaps we expect it or take it for granted. Youth has for so long been driven from our streets, our homes,

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our very hearts, that when we suddenly see it standing before us, looking with great serious and almost sad eyes into our Empire aged souls, we experience a shock of surprise.

This child with long slender limbs, supple body, tender lips and raven black hair, surely she is no *ballerine*, she is not the Star of Paris and favourite of St. Petersburg.

We are dreadfully conscious of her; but she is supremely unconscious of us.

If she were a Bernhardt, shall we say, or a Melba, we should break forth into a volume of applause, for she would demand it as her right. Moreover, we should have been prepared for her entrance.

This slim, spirituelle little figure, which already we feel a breath of wind would carry away, asks nothing of us.

A sense of disappointment seizes the audience: it has been ignored, so it is silent.

Perhaps on that first Monday afternoon at the Coliseum two years ago, when the theatre was half filled with those who neither toil nor spin—worthy men and women from the outskirts of the Metropolis, still suffering from the soul-destroying effects of a British Sabbath—the audience waited, expecting to see Karsavina mount a tight-rope, even hoping she might rouse enthusiasm by risking her neck on a trapeze; or, maybe, it expected half-a-dozen forest-bred lions to rush on to the stage and crouch snarling at her feet while she danced.

Surprise must have increased when none of these things happened, when people discovered that there was not even a song to accompany the dance.

A neighbour looked at her programme: "*L'oiseau de feu.*" Perhaps this meant that the dancer had brought a flock of performing parrots with her.

But only Kosloff appeared.

It is more than probable a portion of the audience thought he slid down from the flies on an invisible tight wire, and that his wonderful leaps and bounds and flights through the air were caused by some hidden mechanism concealed either in the dancer or on the stage.

Here also was the spirit of youth. There is nothing effeminate about Kosloff; to those whose standard of manhood is gauged by the weighing machine at the apothecary's or the railway station he hardly seems flesh and blood; manly, yet scarcely human man.

And she, the woman?

When she danced some of us gaped and, assuring ourselves with the aid of opera glasses that there were no wire attachments or mechanical contrivances, said it was wonderful. Others there were who sat spell-bound: for them there was an atmosphere of magic. Perhaps they had never seen dancing before, only acrobats and contortionists; and ungainly women frantically waving their lingerie in the limelight, or fighting half-a-dozen rounds with some hundred yards of accordion-pleated chiffon.

A verse of Matthew Arnold's eloquently expresses the effect on the audience caused by these Russian Dancers on that damp afternoon of grey July:

They gaze, and the evening wind  
Plays on their faces: they gaze.  
Airs from the Eden of Youth  
Awake and stir in their soul.  
The past returns—they feel  
What they are, alas! what they were.  
They, not Nature are changed.  
Well I know what they feel!  
Hush, for tears  
Begin to steal to their eyes!

To some it may seem ridiculous to read in cold blood that these youthful dancers sent men and women out into the streets from the Coliseum Music Hall with tears in their eyes. But they did, and on a Monday afternoon. Stress is purposely laid on the fact that it was the first day of the week, because, following on the seventh the emotions, energies and intellect of the English people are naturally at their lowest ebb. It was not the elderly but the young people who felt inclined to weep at the recall of the memory of their lost youth; the youth some, perhaps, never knew they possessed until it was stirred to life by Karsavina, Kosloff, and their companions.

In their dancing and the music which accompanied it were portrayed the joy of Existence, the mystery of Love, the splendour of Life. Watching them, we were unconscious that our miserable bodies were confined in fauteuils in a music-hall set down in a wilderness of brick and mortar.

“L’Oiseau de Feu” brought the smell of trees and flowers and the song of birds and the perfume of that earth from which our very clay is formed. The sluggish blood grew hot in our veins. The spirits of dead ancestors awoke and called us back to the days when men loved and fought and danced and sang and therefore really lived. Perhaps for the first time we felt in harmony with life. We realised the meaning of things that had hitherto escaped our notice, the triviality of other things we thought mattered, and which, while these people danced, were being done with sweat and agony in the streets outside.

While we remained holding fast to the arms of our fauteuils, part of us, the spiritual, which, thank God, can at times break all natural laws, went up on the stage and danced in the Forest of Imagination with Karsavina and Kosloff.

The applause which came when the curtain finally fell

would not have satisfied the comedian who had just sung of the joys of Beer and the disadvantages of a Mother-in-law. It did not seem the moment to make a noise; that which we had just seen was so far removed from beer and our daily existence, so spirituelle yet so warm and vital, that we were incapable of expressing our appreciation in the usual way for a thing so unusual.

It was only when we found ourselves in the grey streets outside that we felt ingrate, and wanted to go back and cheer. It was only when we had seen these Dancers for the fourth or fifth time we fully appreciated all they were giving us, all they might teach us if we would learn.

For many it was as if they understood life for the first time, had entered a chamber in the castle Existence which hitherto had been hidden from them. A secret chamber of youthful dreams and ideals; an enormous Pandora's box from which nothing has escaped.

They gave us thoughts, these Russian magicians, for which we have been unconsciously seeking and travailing many years.

They gave us knowledge we thought to buy in a huckster's shop, steal from a bottle of wine, or find in a bloodless novel or in the crude stage-play of the average theatre, bearing little or no relation to life.

Now here it was, all expressed in dances men and women danced thousands of years ago: music of face and body, of muscle and brain, which stirred and sang in our hearts like wind in the trees.

No wonder some of us wept for joy. And those who yawned and shrugged their shoulders and only wondered how Kosloff had learnt to leap so high and how many years it had

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taken Karsavina to balance herself so deftly on one toe, deserve our pity.

Cave dwellers brought suddenly into the sunshine would do the same, and, hiding their faces in their hands, hurry back into the darkness.

To return to the contemplation of our Spirit of Youth, Tamara Karsavina. (You may spell it and pronounce it Thmar or Tamara, blissfully conscious that neither is correct.) Many of our English words in daily use have been so grossly abused that one searches with difficulty for those which will with brevity and simplicity express the simplicity of this woman and the greatness of her Art.

The elusive spirit of youth she most eloquently expresses in "Les Sylphides," the music by Chopin, which is described as a "Rêverie Romantique." The sex of the dancer instead of dominating, disappears. The balance of emotions, of desires and passions is so perfect that, in spite of the long supple limbs, the soft curves of the body, the red lips and the heavy, dark hair bound with a maiden fillet of forest flowers, we are not conscious of her as woman any more than we think of Kosloff or Nijinsky in the same ballet as one of the superior—or inferior—male sex.

They are too ethereal, too far removed from mundane matters. Spirituelle in the æsthetic, not the spiritual sense—for the stage manager has supplied them neither with wings, limelight nor tinsel crowns.

The youth with which Karsavina surrounds herself is the mystery that surrounds a child, until it becomes adult and stumbling upon the still greater mystery of sex hides ashamed beneath the muddy cloak of Propriety instead of rejoicing in its glorious inheritance.



In Karsavina then, in spite of her body feminine and altogether lovely, is this mystery of childhood exemplified. We are not concerned whether this Youth be masculine or feminine. We only feel its vitality, its joyousness and its indestructible beauty.

Les Sylphides is danced in the midst of the ruins of a castle surrounded by trees and flowers and water. There could be no more appropriate setting for Youth. Everything else perishes and passes away, but from the womb of the earth youth springs, eternal.

Karsavina has learnt the secret of the earth, her forests and fields; winter may rob but it cannot kill. Year after year the little green blade, the tender white flowers our heels can crush, mock death and leap from graves the depth of which no man has plumbed, breathing the spirit and pouring the perfume of youth throughout the length and breadth of the land, right up to the gates of each careworn, joyless city; until these ruins which we see, the dust and ashes of men's vain dreams, are covered with flower and foliage.

And thus, Tamara Karsavina, ageless, mocks Age, and embraces Time which may change but cannot destroy. She is as near to us as the moon by whose beams the night is made visible—and as far removed.

She is a glorious trinity: man, woman and child, three in one and one in three. As she floats in mid-air as unsubstantial as a moonbeam and as pale, we long to pursue and take her in our arms, to hold her close and never let her go again.

It seems so easy now we have seen youth to keep it—if we could but catch it. We want to keep in our heart again this child, which must have escaped with our first indiscretion.

In those sombre eyes, which express all the suffering the

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world has undergone and all the joys it ever dreamed, we see the reflection of the Self we intended when we first issued like a tender white flower from the mysterious grave beneath our mother's heart.

So much can a dancing girl express.

So much and vastly more can she remember. For what is it but remembrance which she and her companions give us?

Memories buried like seeds in graves we dare not say how many centuries old; trodden down by feet of priest and pedagog perchance five thousand years ago.

Perhaps east and west have joined hands across those graves and Russia has watered them with her tears until these beautiful flowers, dead men's thoughts, have sprung to life again and are already peeping here and there among the ruins of modern civilisation.

And so of all the good things the Russian Dancers have given us the Spirit of Youth of Tamara Karsavina comes first and foremost. It was our first impression of her at the Coliseum Music Hall. It will not be easily eradicated.

On her return to the Coliseum in 1910 the company was augmented by some dozen performers, and in the Indian dance we had a promise, to be realised this year at Covent Garden, of the stronger, more human and barbaric passions which these wonderful people can express.

For example, another person of her trinity is expressed by Karsavina in *Schéhérazade*. She is altogether woman, conscious of the power of her beauty, passionate; both beauty and passion confined within the prison walls of the harem.

Her body is like a highly-strung instrument, the slightest breath of wind sets the strings quivering. It only knows and can only express the music of love. Those partially concealed

white limbs are hot with desire, the nervous hands wide open, with warm sweet-scented palms eager to plunge themselves in the fountain of emotions and satisfy the burning lips with long draughts of passion.

In "Le Spectre de la Rose" we are practically given the antithesis of this; both Karsavina and Nijinsky express love removed to the realms of poetic fancy. Their bodies, flower-like, representing the spirit of flowers, weave dreams with silent and graceful movements. We are altogether removed from the world of flesh and blood to a kingdom of enchantment.

The Imperial School of Dancing in Russia has sent out many great male dancers, among them Theodore Kosloff, the first to visit these shores and startle us with his fine work, quickly followed by Michael Mordkin; but it has been stated, and by a Russian, that it has produced only one Nijinsky.

That the genius of the masculine element should equal that of the feminine doubtless seems remarkable to us. In the ballets attempted by English music-halls the male characters are always taken by women who, instead of disguising, exaggerate their sex, thus reducing the dance to the level of musical comedy or Christmas pantomime.

The men of the Russian Ballet possess the same technical perfection, the same marvellous grace as the women. Whether their bodies be as slim and light as Nijinsky's and Kosloff's, or as massive and muscular as Mordkin's and Tichomirow's, makes no difference: they can be as graceful, as supple, as tender as a girl, without losing a scrap of their superb masculinity.

Russia is the natural home of music, or perhaps one should say the home of natural music: there, too, must dwell the spirit of drama. For it is impossible to conceive anything more

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dramatic than the mimicry of Anna Pavlova, Sophie Fédorova, Tamara Karsavina, Adolf Bolm and Nijinsky. Though these do not stand alone: a long list of names might be given from the programme, many only members of the Corps de Ballet, who are great actors. Rosay, whose "Des Bouffons" instantly appealed to the British public at the Coliseum Music Hall; Mme. Adamovitsch, who in the Indian Dance in the same hall in 1910 was excellent in her dramatic intensity, and the poetic fancy of Mme. Andersen in "Une Sonje d'Amour," the delicate grace and humour of Schollar and Elsa Will in "Le Carnaval."

The two former ladies have lately been captured by the Alhambra Theatre, which at various periods of its history has shown an appreciation of the art of dancing and a keen desire in face of public apathy to encourage it. It succeeded in producing a choreographic drama many years ago called "Two Little Wooden Shoes," in which Casaboni danced the title rôle. Until the coming of Geltzer, who takes equal rank with the leaders of the Ballet at Covent Garden, the Alhambra Theatre had given us a no more delightful exponent of the Art of dancing.

It will be interesting to see if the Russians have merely made dancing the fashion for a brief space of time, or whether they have dug beneath the frozen surface of our national indifference to the arts and graces of life and laid the foundation stones of the most ancient and incomparable of arts.

What is the secret of the Russian school of dancing?

What is the secret of these dancers whose name is legion, and pronunciation impossible to our unmusical lips? Their training is superb, to us it might seem terrible and only possible

to people of strength of character and intelligence. But it is doubtful if centuries of training would give us what these people possess: the strong personality, the wonderful temperament, the warm intelligence and understanding. They have looked in the mirror of life and they show us its reflections.

They were surely actors before they were dancers: they are all musicians. For them the world is full of music, wherever they go they take this music with them.

If we were asked for a definition of dancing we should probably quote Mr. Annandale, who describes it as "a studied movement of the limbs, generally adjusted to the measure of a tune." It is doubtful if that definition would pass in the modern ballroom.

"Studied movements of the limbs, adjusted to the measure of a tune." You may see this in almost any music-hall, but neither the limbs nor the tune possess any rhythm.

Mr. Annandale never saw Taglioni, and, alas! he will never see Karsavina, Pavlova or Nijinsky, so his definition will go unchallenged.

A countryman from the wilds of Dartmoor who visited Covent Garden was heard to say he hoped to see nothing more beautiful than the leaping of a horse or the flight of a bird, but that the Dancers in the Russian Ballet excelled both.

The leaping of Nijinsky, the flight of Karsavina.

No member of the Russian school of dancing can take even the humblest place in the ballet unless he be an actor and, at heart, a musician. Dancing may be taught, acting is a gift: it is intuitive. The actor is born, not made; though, through lack of training and without the knowledge of the technique of his art, he may remain in obscurity all his life.

The training of a Russian Dancer commences before he is



eight years old : it is finally completed when he is about thirty-five, when, if he be of the rank and file, he retires and lives on his pension. This training received by all alike is as thorough and the discipline as severe as that of the great armies of the Continent. Each member, if he has the talent and the desire, has a chance of becoming a Nijinsky or a Fédorova : each is a unit of separate worth, acting, living and participating in the story and action of the choreographic drama in which he appears. From the rise to the fall of the curtain they all remain in the atmosphere of the play, they never step out of the picture, they are part and parcel of the whole. Those men and women, whose names may not even appear on the programme, are as important to the drama as Bolm or Fokina.

They know it; we feel it.

On the contrary, in our ballets the average coryphée, partly because she has no temperament and partly because her training has never exceeded even if it has reached Mr. Annandale's definition of dancing, goes through her performances after the fashion of one of a troupe of performing dogs—though not always with the same amount of intelligence. And when she herself is not actively engaged in pirouetting she stands in the wings staring at the audience, blissfully self-conscious and frankly bored with the *Première Ballerine* who is posing in many moons of limelight in the centre of the stage.

It is not altogether her fault : she has gone through studied movements of the limbs adjusted more or less to the measure of a tune : her master never suggested that she should attempt studied movements of the brain. Probably she has not the faintest idea that her dancing is supposed to convey anything to the audience. She remembers to smile the while she is actively engaged in dancing ; but again she only uses the muscles of

her face to suggest pleasure as she uses the muscles of her legs to suggest movement. Her heart does not smile, or her brain. Both are atrophied.

Only a short time ago one of our leading music-halls advertised the advent of some twenty English Dancers, almost as if to challenge the Russians. It was not the fault of these young ladies that the shortness of their legs was emphasised by their thickness: their training had fitted them for the football field rather than the ballet. They wore a vast amount of unnecessary lingerie, with bits of colour pinned in impossible places, and yellow wigs. They rattled their feet against the boards of the stage, executed certain manœuvres and some high kicks. And while they did this they all sang, or according to Mr. Annandale whose definition is the more expressive, "they gave out small, shrill or humming sounds, relating something in poetry or verse."

A little later they asked members of the audience to come up on to the stage and play with them. The request was made several times: but though the thermometer was normal on that particular summer evening no one accepted the invitation.

Have we no sense of humour?

If these young people had not been boomed as English Dancers at a leading hall of the capital of Great Britain reference would not have been made to them: but in writing the story of the Ballet Dancers one lays oneself open to the accusation of being prejudiced or unpatriotic for not mentioning the work of Englishwomen.

Alas! that the great artist Genée is not English. She at least has not been unappreciated in this country, and in one ballet at the Empire Theatre she found work worthy of her talent, *Coppélia* to wit.



Nevertheless if the coming and the success of these Russians mean the revival of dancing there is little doubt that England in time will be able to produce great dancers.

Indeed now and then frequenters of the variety theatres who are also lovers of this lost Art have seen flitting across the stage for a brief space of time the likeness of an English Taglioni, the promise of a Pavlova and a Karsavina. Undoubtedly if Miss Beatrice Collier (who has danced at the Empire Theatre) had been born in Russia and trained in the school at St. Petersburg, she might already have been one of the *Première Ballerines* of the world. Again, what might not Miss Phyllis Bedells do in the hands of Fokine? And at an outlying theatre about a year ago there came and went another young dancer of equal promise, Miss Geraldine Somerset. In Russia, in Spain, in France even, the grace and beauty and latent talent of these women, whose names surely betray their nationality, would long ago have been recognised and turned to some account.

In England, where are they, what are they doing?

And has not the genius of men like Fred Farren and the grace of men like Lionel Mackinder been wasted?

It is vain to wish they had entered the Imperial School at St. Petersburg with Tamara Karsavina and Nijinsky, but we dare believe that they would have graduated with a diploma of the first degree, and one at least might have striven for the honour bestowed on Karsavina by the French Government on the occasion of her appearance in Paris in 1910.

Theodore Kosloff graduated from the Imperial School at Moscow, which he entered in 1890, when he was eight years old. It was not until 1900 that he obtained the diploma of first degree.

And it was only a year or two ago that he obtained the degree of premier danseur.

Ida Rubinstein, whom very few of us will remember and who has long ago forgotten us, also came from Moscow, where she is *Première Mime*.

Schollar and Vera Fokina are *Premières Danseuses*—notice the distinction.

Than Fokina's *Danse Bacchanale* in *Cléopâtre* no more perfect expression of the joy and beauty of the senses has been seen, only and always excepting the glorious *Bacchanale d'Automne* of Pavlova and Mordkin at the Palace Theatre.

But Fokina was not only superb, like Pavlova; she was also terrible in her Bacchic frenzy, magnificent in her pure abandon.

Sophie Fédorova, the *Ta-hor* in *Cléopâtre*, also hails from Moscow, and is described as a *Première Ballerine*.

As a danseuse pure and simple we were not given many opportunities of seeing her. But as an actress she takes rank with Bernhardt, Dusé, and Modjeska.

One should go right through the lists of names published in the programmes at Covent Garden—which read like characters from “*A Thousand and One Nights*”—but to describe the work of each artist is a task our friend Mr. Annandale might fear to attempt.

They are all artists. One almost feels inclined to apologise for the use of a word upon which so much obloquy has been heaped in England. Shall we say with Mr. Annandale again that “they are all peculiarly skilful in the profession and practice of one of the fine arts—which is something that appeals to the taste or sense of beauty.”

And of Anna Pavlova and Michael Mordkin—who for two seasons have really earned for the Palace Theatre the title of

the most beautiful in Europe it had the temerity to boast before their coming—what can be said?

Our English is exhausted: "*Voici nous trouvons la stupéfiante virtuosité se pleine d'aisance de la troupe la plus riche et la plus homogène que l'on puisse concevoir.*"

Pavlova in her *Valse Caprice* and in the *L'Automne Bacchanale* is incomparable, just as Fédorova is incomparable in *Cléopâtre*, Karsavina in *Schéhérazade*. Or how can we compare Mordkin with Nijinsky?

Truly there is only one Nijinsky, but their art is incomparable.

That is the greatest achievement of these Russians, that is their genius, that is their fascination. Each stands alone on the secure foundation he has builded for himself: each possesses and keeps his own vivid personality and temperament. And yet this striking personality is used, not to hide, but to clothe the characters they represent in each choreographic drama.

And it might not be out of place to remember an English actor who possessed this gift to a remarkable degree, Henry Irving. An actor with personality so strong, almost overwhelming, that it seemed ridiculous to think he who made *Matthias* in "The Bells" a dreadful reality for us could, the next moment, pour his individuality into the genial, breezy "Vicar of Wakefield," and make him no less real. The parallel between Nijinsky and Karsavina in "Les Sylphides" and in "Schéhérazade" is the same.

Of course in a profession which embraces a trinity of arts, Euterpe, Melpomene and Terpsichore, one artist will often be more favoured than the other by one of the three muses. For example, in pure technique doubtless the toe-work of Geltzer stands pre-eminent: no other dancer is as perfect as Pavlova





*Bert*

*Paris*

in the use of her arms. As a mime Karsavina is without a rival.

Surely all three muses attended the birth of Nijinsky.

That this great art of the dancer will appeal to the sense of beauty of the English public is not yet certain. There is some danger that it may shock its sense of propriety: but it obviously does appeal to its purse. For where hundreds paid but five shillings to see the Russian Dances at the Coliseum Music Hall, there were thousands anxious to pay thirty shillings to watch them at Covent Garden.

But a sense of beauty cannot be bought. If you would really enjoy the stories of the Russian Ballet and create and keep an English Ballet, you must cash your cheque, not at the box office of the theatre, but at the bank of Human Existence.

And the journey to that bank is a long and dangerous one. But it is worth taking if, at the end of it, a Modjeska or a Karsavina, a Rodin or a Caruso is the cashier who waits to give you your change.

Gold, which has been tried by fire.









*Bert*

*Paris*

# LE CARNAVAL.

By FOKINE.

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*Music by SCHUMANN.*

*Orchestrated by RIMSKY-KORSAKOV, LOADOV, GLAZIUNOV and TCHEREPNIN.*

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Columbine . . . . .	Mmes. WILL
Chiarina . . . . .	FOKINA
Estrella . . . . .	SCHOLLAR
Papillon . . . . .	NIJINSKA
Pierrot . . . . .	MM. BOLM
Arlequin . . . . .	NIJINSKY
Pantalon . . . . .	CECCHETTI
Eusébius . . . . .	KUSSOV
Florestan . . . . .	SEMENOV

---

“L'air de Carnaval de Venise,  
Sur les canaux jadis chanté  
Et qu'un soupir de folle brise  
Dans le ballet a transporté!”

—Gautier.

**I**S it Venice or Paris? Are we in Vienna or Petersbourg,  
or can the scene be laid in London?

Perhaps the atmosphere is too electric, the episode too  
daintily amorous and the gaiety too elusive for the latter city.

Nay, it is Anywhere, Everywhere.

Anywhere, where the spirit of Fun is not dead, but only  
sleeps. Everywhere, where the joy of life lurks at street corners  
and in chambers of our houses to trap us unawares and send  
us away dancing for a youthful hour of delight.

An ante-room in the Hall of Carnival. The most ridiculous

delicious room the heart of Columbine or Pantalón ever conceived.

Pale purple curtains stretched across the face of the outer world, shutting it out. And two quaint little symmetrically-striped sofas on which our grandmothers would have delighted to flirt their naughty crinolines.

Oh, those virtuous Victorian grandmothers, why did they wear crinolines and poke bonnets? Not to conceal rosy lips and slender limbs—hardly to protect them!—knowing well the slightest breeze from Love's warm mouth would conquer both.

Here they come, a troop of them, crinolined and bonneted for the fray, and their cavaliers, velvet-coated and tightly trousered, with jaunty stove-pipe hats.

Gallant hypocrites, the lot! The devil take them: neither better nor worse than we, but what fun they created with their mock modesty and their pretty pretence of virtue.

Sentimental too. Hark to the music. Light as thistle-down, blown here and there, high and low by every little wanton wind. Music that makes sport of love and mocks passion, yet sets the blood dancing beneath crinolines and trousers, poke bonnets and stove-pipe hats.

Feet will soon be dancing, too. Here comes Columbine, pursued by Philistines we think. The hussy shows her legs! An outrage on the crinolines, possessing none and knowing not the name—until wicked Love purses up his lips and blows—Heigh presto, then. Does Estelle confess to stockings and did Chiarina's bawdy petticoat, blown high, suggest long drawers, lace-bordered?

Shocked are the Philistines, the game is spoiled for them. For who will now pursue stately petticoats with which the boldest breeze dare not coquette?

But who are these in white and gentian blue, beckoning us to follow to the dance? Like rose leaves blown from an old-world garden they come and go; while we fidget to pursue.

Here is Pierrot. He is sick with love. The room is empty. Not a partner for the waltz.

He creeps disconsolate to the very borders of Carnival-Land, and curling himself up on the floor he sleeps!

Now Florestan appears, gay, debonair, and woos impetuously, first one then another of the timid little hypocrites in crinolines.

He woos and loses each in turn. Columbine calls him, he pursues.

Pierrot still sleeps. His turn will come. Now Eusébius is busy; poor romantic fool: anything masked or petticoated—for his faith in hidden femininity would remove mountains.

The music of the Carnival mocks him. Gay and roguish like the wicked eyes and lips that cheat him; yearning and seductive like the tender, stockinged limbs the virtuous crinoline so craftily exposes.

Torn in twain with emotions, frantic with fruitless love he rushes away—into the arms of Columbine.

Here at least is no deception. “A dance!”

His arms are about her—she has gone! She is in the arms of the impetuous Florestan, standing on tip-toe to kiss his lips. He flies to her rescue and embraces—his rival.

To and fro she dances: they pursue. She is light as air: petticoats of gauze reveal white limbs like lily stalks. She has nothing to conceal; her beauty is the pleasure of an hour. Let him who wins it take it.

O fickle Columbine, you know your Pierrot sleeps. You

know your legs are fairer than the limbs of the be-flounced Philistine. You know this is but Carnival. And so you romp and flirt and tease and tantalise, and give freely of all the good gifts the gods have lent you. For to-morrow those purple curtains will rise on the world and you will have to go back to it—sans jambes, sans lèvres, sans *divers choses!*

Pierrot awakes, and she is gone. In vain pursuit Florestan and foolish Eusébius.

Papillon with shining wings hovers in mid-air. Pierrot awakes, stretches, rubs his eyes. If Columbine is false why should he be true? The violins are singing of sunshine and here is the prettiest creature, born of his beams, waiting to be captured.

She spreads her wings, enticing him: nothing loth he follows. Ay, though she can fly, he can dance. To and fro, up and down, every movement rich with poetry, instinct with joy. Her wings caress him; he clasps her in his arms—and holds the air.

She has gone. Whither? Now she hovers above his head. Now she has settled on a flower at his feet. Oh, he has forgotten Columbine. He must possess the pretty creature: this flighty thing of fancy.

Ah! She crouches on the ground, there in that further corner. Her wings are quivering and her little head is bowed. Slowly he stalks her. She cannot see him coming, she cannot hear him.

He chuckles to himself, and opens the wide mouth of his conical white cap.

Infinite caution. A couple more steps—and he pounces on Papillon and covers her with his cap.

Oho! She thought to escape. But he has her safe. And



there is no one watching. The Philistines have been routed by Crinoline and Columbine. The rest are dancing and flirting, and Eros is playing the very devil with grandmothers' hooped propriety.

In an ecstasy of joy Pierrot, on his knees, bends his head and lays an ear against the cap and listens for the frightened fluttering of Papillon's wings.

He chuckles and rubs his hands. She is there. She did not escape. Now is the moment . . .

With infinite precaution he closes the mouth of his cap and slowly raises it. Listens again.

Little Papillon, would she fool him? He cannot hear the fluttering wings. He opens his cap and thrusts an eager hand to grope for his treasure.

Alas! O poor Pierrot. She is not there.

In vain you search. Ere your hat fell she spread her wings and flitted with the music to join the lovers in their Carnival of joy.

No, she is not there, nor here, nor anywhere!

But soon again the whole mad happy crowd come dancing round him. Chiarina and Estrella and Arlequin and Pantalón: Eusébius and Florestan. They waltz with the wind and they float on the air which blows them from lover to lover.

Carnival, carnival. The joy of springtime, the madness of mid-summer.

The crinolines of our grandmother achieve their object shamelessly, perhaps because the Philistines have gone. Estrella is no longer jealous of Columbine and Chiarina is blissfully unconscious of her little lace-lipped drawers, for is not the mantle of youth the only garment needed for the Carnival?

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And that is all we are conscious of when the curtains fall.  
The spirit of youth, of fun and of laughter. An hour of pure  
delight.

But yet!—

Jovial et mélancolique,  
Ah! vieux thème du carnaval,  
Où le rire aux larmes réplique,  
Que ton charme m'a fait de mal!







*Bert*

*Paris*

# CLÉOPÂTRE.

Arranged by FOKINE.

Music by ARENSKY, TANEIEFF, RIMSKY-KORSAKOV, GLINKA, GLAZOUNOV  
and MOUSSORGSKY.

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Ta-Hor . . . . .	SOPHIE FÉDOROVA
Cléopâtre . . . . .	SERAPHIME ASTAFIEWA
Une Grecque . . . . .	VERA FOKINA
Esclave Favorite de Cléopâtre . . . . .	ELSA WILL
Amoûn . . . . .	ADOLPH BOLM
Esclave Favori de Cléopâtre . . . . .	NIJINSKY
Le Grand Prêtre du Temple . . . . .	JEAN KUSSOV

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*Servantes du Temple* : Mmes. Miechkovska, Hohlova, Julitza, Kandina, Elpe, Decombe.  
*Danseuses égyptiennes* : Mmes. Vassilevska, Baronovitch I., Baronovitch II., Kopetzinska, Klementovitch, Gonsiorovska, Guliuk, Jeserska.  
*Danseurs égyptiens* : MM. Molotsov, Umansky, Orlik, Jakliel, Gudin, Machat.  
*Danseuses juives* : Mmes. Gashevskaja, Sasonova, Fromann, Laschilina, Vassilieva, Reisen, Larionova.  
*Danseurs juifs* : MM. Kobeleff, Zailich.  
*Grecques* : Mmes. Chernysheva, Nijinsky, Konietzka, Biber, Heine, Cherepanova.  
*Grecs* : MM. Semenov, Alexandrov, Sergheiev, Kotchetovsky, Romanov, Varjinsky.  
*Silènes* : MM. Rosal, A. Molotsov.

And that great night of love more strange than this,  
When she that made the whole world's bale and bliss  
    Made king of all the world's desire a slave,  
And killed him in mid-kingdom with a kiss.

—Swinburne.

## C LÉOPÂTRE.

The greatest of all the ballets. The most beautiful and terrible of all the stories told by the Dancers.

Une Nuit de Cléopâtre. The queen whose beauty is imperishable, for it has survived the centuries. She rules to-

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day as she did two thousand years ago; but her rule is transferred from Egypt to the whole world, the world for which she hungered.

Who among us has not sometimes given rein to his imagination that it might picture for him the great Queen, her court and the men who loved her, kings and slaves; that vast lap of land she held between her hands, the hungry desert fed and starved alternately by the Nile? Imagination, sometimes with the aid of music, a book or a play may have taken us far, but no pictures we have seen on stage or canvas, and probably no music we have heard has satisfied imagination.

The stage play gorgeously mounted left us as hungry and unsatisfied as a visit to the mummy behind its screen of glass in the British Museum.

Shells both, containing dust, not flesh and blood: a little paint and powder. Both left us cold.

Fokine has dug deep into the centuries and from the graveyard of ancient glories has extricated, not dust and ashes but warm, perfumed memories. And magician-like he has poured these memories into the heart of each member of his ballet, into every person connected with the production of this drama of the Nile. The result is a picture perfect in every detail and, we are forced to believe even if we are deaf to the voice of instinct, an absolutely true reflection of the great Queen Cléopâtre.

Fokine has allowed the past to produce his Choreographic Drama, so he has avoided the pitfalls of many modern managers.

The Scene.

The Nile where she winds like a green serpent through a

vast waste of desert. There is just visible the arch of a temple, its entrance guarded by great figures of stone. The ground on which it stands is flanked by pillars which tower towards the sky. The waters of the river gleam between these pillars. The sun is sinking into the hot desert.

It is evening and night is hurrying over the restless sand. It is silent. The world looks grey and lifeless. Through the veil of heat which hides the desert like a veil the face of a woman, only the colours of the pillars gleam.

Until we see coming through the curtain of the night the figure of a woman. Ta-hor, the beloved of Amoûn. She seeks him.

He comes, a young chief, bow and arrow in hand, bounding over the desert sand, instinct with life and love. In the precincts of this temple they are alone. The veil of twilight, the vast pillars, the quiet river deep in the bed of the desert weave around these two figures a curious enchantment.

She, perhaps, a priestess of the temple; he a warrior. The Nile has cast her spell upon them and love is the only thing that matters. Music quivers from hands and feet, lips and eyes. Yet it is remote and far away.

The spell of Fokine, the magician, is upon us already. We, even we, have drifted back with time, and leaving our carcasses in our seats we lie on the hot sand and watch these two dance with love under the star-shine. We realise that we dream because we are conscious of fear. There is a sense of impending evil. We would warn them to flee with their love far away into the desert beyond, now gleaming a still, grey sea of sand beneath the eyes of the night.

The silence is broken with the distant tramp of many feet. Suddenly there appears the High Priest of the temple. The

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Queen is coming. The Queen of Egypt and of love. Ta-hor clings with arms and lips to Amoûn.

She is terrible, this Cléopâtre. It is said that few men have looked into her eyes and lived. Let them fly away into the night with their love before she appears.

But the young man laughs. He, too, has heard strange tales of this Queen, the Serpent of the Nile; she for whose favours kings have shed blood, and bargained with empires. He would see her. Let them stay; perhaps from her lips will fall some secrets of love: perhaps in her hands she holds the mystery of the God of Wars.

She comes.

And Ta-hor shrinks back into the shadows of the temple dragging her lover with her.

She comes. And with her, music, melodious, yearning; and red, uncertain light of torches and the glitter of gold and silver, and white bodies of women mingling with black bodies of men.

She comes.

She is here within the encircling pillars of the temple. But we only see her dancing girls, her slaves, her priests and her soldiers. The Queen is hidden in her litter, shaped and painted like a sarcophagus. She is hidden from the heat and glare and dust of the journey.

The litter is laid on the ground, slaves open the coffin-like carriage. Cléopâtre is lifted out and stands mummy-like beneath the glare of countless torches invisible beneath her veils. All we see is the suggestion of her voluptuous beauty.

Two slaves advance, kneel down, unfasten the first veil, and then slowly passing and repassing as they circle around her they unwind it.



We hold our breath, we who lie somewhere in the hot sand watching. We fancy we still hear Ta-hor imploring her lover to hasten away. Something warns us, too, that it is not safe to stay. But we could not go now if we would.

One veil has been cast aside : another is slowly unwound. Long perfumed woofs of colour, these veils.

And now the outline of rounded limbs and the curves of the beautiful body.

Veil after veil, as if her slaves would bare her to our eager gaze.

But the last thread of colour floats to the ground and we see Cléopâtre as we have dreamed her.

Hair wonderful and curled, the colour of the Egyptian sunset; large curved lips which made slave the mouth of the world, blood red and thirsty. A gracious brow beneath a long low forehead : eyes, narrow, heavy-lidded; bright and cruel as snakes' eyes, coloured like a serpent. Her face as faded fire built on a pillar of ivory. Her body quivering through a sheen of golden draperies, subtle and sleek and stately : sweet with perfumes; soft veined; warm with amorous ambitions. Her bare feet washed snow-white with the tears of forgotten lovers.

Awhile she stands gazing at those who dare not gaze at her. Then she raises arms which ache to hold the whole world prisoner to her breast, and her favourite slaves, a girl and a negro, crawling to her side lead her to the couch they have prepared.

Fans drive scented breezes to and fro above the bed. The negro crouches at the head of the couch, his great eyes rolling from side to side, his nostrils distended, his fingers trembling to perform some service for his Queen. He is entirely animal, this creature. Another slave approaches, and his black body

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bends like a bow, ready to spring upon and annihilate a possible rival. He is more than Cléopâtre's slave: and he is less. A thing of flesh and blood for her to tread upon; a hireling of passion; a toy of emotions, fascinating, repulsive, brutal. A dreadful instrument, ready to slay or be slain.

We see him as a background to the woman of Macedonia, Queen of Egypt, mistress of life and death.

She is resting, her limbs tangled in a mass of colour: her eyes, fixed like a serpent's, staring into the hot night of the desert while she waits for what it will bring her.

What can it bring her that is new?

She is tired of the wealth the world has poured at her feet: of the jewels slaves have dug from the bowels of the earth: of the gold and silver they have wrought so cunningly: of silks and perfumes and wines: tired of her dancing girls, and of music, and of the bloody games men and beasts have played for her pleasure.

There is one thing that never tires and is ever new. And the subtle limbs uncurl from the tangled colours, open like a rose at a breath of warm wind—to close again with a little shiver of ecstasy. Love is always new and beautiful. Eros, at least, never comes twice in the same disguise.

Of love she has never tired, only of lovers. And those eyes, coloured like the skin of a serpent, turn from the desert to the crowd around her couch. Then back to the desert again.

What strange new fruit from the tree of desire will Osiris send to slake her thirst to-night?

She moves restlessly, and the movements of her body are like the movements of waves on the ocean, rising and falling, curving and twisting. A billow of pink sea-foam; an estuary of smooth white water.



She leans forward to speak to her favourite, the girl at her feet. The crouching negro rises on his toes, his black eyes scintillating: he has learnt to read nearly every mood of his mistress-Queen, and he shivers with jealous fear at the passing of each one.

Wine for his mistress?—she will not drink. Music?—she wearies of it, loveless. Her dancing girls?—the time has not yet come.

Her head sinks like the hot sun into a cloud of silken scarves which hold the colour of her hair. She closes her eyes: her lips part, disclosing the pearls of her mouth, which, fancy paints, were born of kisses.

Suddenly the negro slave leaps forward with arms outstretched, threatening a stranger who dares approach too close to his Queen.

It is Ta-hor's lover. He scarcely notices the slave. His eyes are fixed on the woman, and in his eyes shine heaven and hell.

One expects the negro to leap upon Amoûn and tear him to pieces: his face is horrible, his body is horrible, both contorted with impotent passion.

And from the mysterious darkness of the temple Ta-hor approaches. Swiftly and silently she comes. And at the touch of her hands her lover starts and remembers and slowly retreats.

But Cléopâtre has seen him.

She sees that he is young and beautiful and strong. The Gods have been good to him. She wonders what would happen if she told her jealous slave to destroy him. She raises a finger and the negro like a dog is fawning at her feet.

She gazes into the gloom of the temple and she sees Ta-hor

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holding Amoûn with arms and lips, terrified lest she lose him.

And the Serpent of the Nile smiles.

At a sign the high priest of the temple approaches. And presently a dance commences, sacred and solemn, led by Ta-hor herself.

A minion she, to hold so strong a man as her chieftain by the slender thread of love. She is scarcely beautiful: she has the fond, foolish eyes of an animal and the skin of the desert, and the hair of the night. She is small and fashioned like a flower.

And her lover—he is hiding behind the great pillars. He is peering through the dancers. He is gazing at Cléopâtre.

And he is not afraid. He is more daring than other men. He does not even bend his head: he gives glance for glance.

Insolent! He approaches. The girl's arms save him again.

But he is hot and passionate now, he struggles with her. Ta-hor pleads and fondles and prays. And under her breath Cléopâtre laughs.

The dance proceeds. Ta-hor falters: her strength is failing her: the music sounds far away. Her eyes are ever searching the shadows for her lover: but no matter in which direction she looks she sees gleaming jewels lighting the darkness: the eyes of the insatiable Serpent of the Nile.

The negro crawls closer to his Queen, and the muscles of his body tremble like bars of hammered steel, sweat oozes from the pores of his skin. His thick lips mouth the word "*Kill.*"

If his Queen but lowered her eyelids—but Amoûn is hidden in the outer wall of darkness. The dance is over: the music grows fainter and fainter. Then one false note plucked from

a string rises sharp and clear. The wind sings a moment, then is still.

Soldiers, slaves and women shiver with fear and a terrified murmur goes up.

Cleaving the torch-lit gloom an arrow has fallen not a foot away from the couch of Cléopâtre. She alone is unmoved though death is quivering so close that her hand might hold it. And the craven slave leaps back. The soldiers rush forward and disappear behind the pillars of the temple. Someone plucks the arrow from the ground, and with it a papyrus.

The soldiers have found the miscreant and have dragged him before their Queen; they await her signal to destroy.

But Amoûn does not know fear. His eyes can gaze their full of her now. To have seen her so is worth death.

She has risen to her feet. Like some evil thing vomited from the mud of the Nile the negro crawls after her. The slave girl reads to her what is written upon the papyrus.

Love.

Cléopâtre bends her head. The ivory of her neck gleams in the torchlight: her breast of foam; her hands, palms wide open, held up to the stars.

Osiris has heard her prayer. Here indeed is love in strange disguise. Truly this is something new. She looks at the young chief. Will he throw himself at her feet and plead?

He says no word, he makes no movement. Only his eyes ravish her. Shall she kill him, shall she love him, shall she dismiss him?

All men are her slaves, and here is one who would play at being King.

A gesture, and the soldiers release him. She turns away and rests her hands on the arms of her slave: the lips of the

slave girl would fain whisper love; the mouth of the negro spits death.

Cléopâtre leaves both in the hands of fate. She remembers the little priestess who danced: the minion with the fond, foolish eyes of an animal and the body of a flower and the hair of the night.

Already she has cast herself, this desert child, at the feet of her lover. She gives him tender kisses while his heart yearns for the fierce fangs of the Serpent. She weeps cold tears while his body would fain be scorched by flames.

"It is death," she cries, "come away. It is death." And the hideous slave echoes the word mockingly.

Amoûn flings aside the girl he loves and stands before the Queen of Life and Death.

"I am yours. Give me of your love."

The negro prepares to strike, but Cléopâtre sends him to heel and frothing at the mouth he writhes away. She faces Amoûn, who, with the temerity of youth, has demanded where others pleaded. She looks him up and down, from head to foot. Yes, he is indeed a King now, but to-morrow he will be a slave again. Still he is magnificent. His eyes are like stars. His arms might crush a kingdom.

"Love is death," she says.

"Give me death," Amoûn replies.

A King indeed. "This night is mine and I will give it to you," Cléopâtre whispers, "if, when you have lain by my side and tasted the sweetness of my lips, you are prepared to take Death in your arms and taste the bitterness of his."

"So be it," he replies. "After I have known you there will be nothing left to know but Death. Give me yourself, and Annihilation."

The stars grow pale as Cléopâtre raises her eyes. She signals to her slaves and they prepare her couch.

Music fills the night. Cléopâtre is waiting, but her lover does not come. Ta-hor, his mate, the first woman of his choice, has flung herself upon him. He cannot shake her off. Pity and passion strive for supremacy in his breast. Passion wins. He throws her to the ground. Soldiers and slaves and dancing girls stand motionless, watching.

And Cléopâtre from her couch watches too, smiling. And the negro slave writhing in the dust at her feet also watches.

Ta-hor will not be denied. She is fighting like an animal now. She is fighting for his life, not for his love. She will send him away to a world of women so that she save him from this woman from whose lips he will drink poison.

Love gives Ta-hor supernatural strength. She drags Amoûn away: her fingers fasten around his throat. They reach the pillars. The shadows of the night are swallowing them up. She has saved him.

Cléopâtre is no longer watching. She turns with a jest to her slave girl.

And the man who would be a King turns his head to look on a Queen for the last time.

Cléopâtre knows he cannot go. Passion has won—and he takes the little thing he loved and casts her out into the darkness; she rolls away into the hot sand. And, like the arrow he released from his bow, he flings himself across the intervening space to the feet of the woman who holds death between her lips.

The slave girl hides her face. The negro crawls away out of sight.

But the chosen man kneels at the side of his Queen. He

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dare not touch her. It is a long time before he can look at her. And then she opens the palms of her hands and he lays his own upon them and she draws him closer, closer.

Like the sea-foam, her body is tempest-tossed. Brighter than sunshine her eyes burn into his soul. Like pomegranates waiting to be devoured, her lips.

And the music sings songs of the desert, invocations to the Nile, hymns to the God of Love. And there rush on a tumult of men and women; musicians, syrens, slaves: and the curtain of night, drawn across the grey desert beyond, is rent with colours and sounds.

Around the couch of Cléopâtre, revolving like the passing minutes, a medley of women. They seem to have been blown like sand from the desert. They group and twine themselves about the lovers. The music moves us like a gentle breeze. It is the music of enchantment, of love which longs yet fears to slake its thirst.

Everywhere women are laughing and whispering. Now they fall back and make a pathway down which glide the Egyptian Dancers.

*Pianissimo.*

Stringed instruments are thrumming like nightingales. Love grows bolder. The Egyptian dancers move slowly and quietly. They came out of the darkness and the night and they have brought the night with them. They are as mysterious, as elusive, as suggestive.

*Andante.*

They glide: they hesitate and halt, poise on bare, brown feet. They are like shadows pursuing shadows.

They are the apostles of love bringing to a King the desire of the world. Veiled lovers, shifting and almost shapeless:





*Bert*

*Paris*

FOKINA.  
NIJINSKA.





dusky flowers of the sand. Sweet perfumes are blown from their garments.

*Allegretto.*

We who lie hidden on the hot earth creep closer. The music is rising. The dance has become less shadow-like, the movements are more defined. Hands and faces uplifted, feet raised high. An invocation to the gods.

A vast crowd throngs the precincts of the temple. The night blows them to the temple in twos and threes. String and wind and brass are uniting in a hymn of delight.

*Presto.*

The whole great company of men and women is dancing : no longer shadow shapes but flesh and blood. Bold, crude colours stream with the torchlight; brown limbs and black, raven hair and red.

Closer yet closer in imagination we draw. They are calling us, they are luring us, these battalions of barbarians clothed with flames of green and gold and purple.

Our breath comes quickly, our pulses throb and our hands and faces grow damp with sweat. We cannot remain hiding behind the veil of night much longer. We must join them.

Cléopâtre and Amoûn are hidden from sight, but we are participating in the joy of this night of love.

The spell of the Serpent of the Nile is upon us, we would not shake it off if we could. The stars of the desert and the passionate music of strange instruments, the beautiful girls and the black virile bodies of the slaves, the waves of light poured everywhere from countless torches and the distant wall of soldiers and priests:—life and death surrounding the Bacchanale of Love.

Suddenly a crash as of thunder. And the flood of dancing humanity sinks silently down on to the ground.

We cease to breathe. The heart delays its beat. Silence for an infinitesimal space of time. Where a mass of colour made drunk our brain only the night and the river and the pillars of the temple.

Up springs the slave girl of the Queen, holding out a green veil which floats on the breeze. Like a crazy moonbeam she quivers across the sand and after her leaps the negro who an hour ago was mouthing death.

But the Queen has cast her spell on him as on all of us. The atmosphere is charged with love.

Was he horrible, this ebony slave? He is beautiful now. His movements are like the flight of a swallow, so swift they cannot be followed. He mocks the height of the pillars which seem to touch the sky. He leaps above the slave girl who draws him with her veil—and his fingers, like feathers, touch the end of it. He takes it from her and it floats, a cloud of gauze, above their heads. She has it again, and together they dance beneath it; pursuing, eluding, hiding, uniting.

No sound they make to break the stillness of the night. Their bodies are like reeds of the Nile and the veil is a handful of mist they have plucked from her bosom, twisting, tossing and floating with it; binding and winding it, losing and finding it.

First the physical, now the spiritual. For this is sheer delight, and willingly the soul joins forces with the body, and we are caught up in a whirlwind of emotions which carries us into unknown regions.

And we who are lying in the dust, the dust of old half-

forgotten dreams, care not. We are glad to go and if there is no return—well, we shall not regret.

The veil is rent. Man and maid pass out of the torch-light. A hundred quivering forms leap to their feet. For a moment we see Cléopâtre and her lover again. A moment only, but in that moment we can understand and envy :

*“The Love that caught light from Death’s own eyes  
And filled Death’s lips with fiery words and sighs.”*

And now it is the darkest hour of the night. Each fugitive minute that follows brings nearer dawn and death. But for love and the lovers, the dance and the dancers there is no dawn, there is no death.

*Crescendo.*

The hour has struck. The gates of love have opened. Soldiers and slaves, priests and servitors vacate the amphitheatre of the temple where Eros has been crowned King. Vacant and vast for a moment. With one clear call the music heralds the approach of the Bacchanale.

Like a cloud of locusts from the desert they are swarming through the pillars. Prancing on either side of them Silenes, dreadful Satyrs.

Not women of Egypt these, but Greeks with pale faces and fair white flesh.

They overwhelm us on the instant. With bare arms beating the air they divest poor civilisation of the last rag she has wound about her famished skeleton. They tear to shreds and scatter to the stars Propriety and Impropropriety, Virtue and Vice. With Aphrodite they have sprung from the clean cool depths of the unpolluted sea.

Barbarians if you will, beautiful from their toes to their

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finger-tips, beautiful as white birds that know neither heaven nor earth for resting-place.

We who dreamed we lay hidden in the hot sand, or those who perchance still know they are cooped in stalls or boxes like driven cattle, sever the chains of cumbersome flesh and join the orgy of joy.

Here is a real Bacchanale. Women and fauns and satyrs unnumbered, smelling of earth and sea and sky, mad with love and lust of life. In ecstasy they fling themselves high up into the air, then hurl themselves down on to the ground dragging silence with them. A moment later, with quivering arms, tossing chords of music towards the lovers' couch.

One tall woman with flaming hair and eyes, and a slim white body rises right out of the writhing mass, rises like the white implacable Aphrodite, sweetly shaped, terrible, laughing with love, scattering roses of delight :

. . . The beautiful lips and fingers,  
Full of songs and kisses and little whispers.  
Full of music ; only beheld among them  
Soar, as a bird soars,

Newly fledged, her visible song, a marvel,  
Made of perfect sound and exceeding passion  
Sweetly shapen, terrible, full of thunders,  
Clothed with the wind's wings.

\* \* \* \*

Cléopâtre has risen from her couch : Amoûn is standing beside her. The high priest of the temple, who has been waiting like a figure of carved stone, unmoved, holds between his hands the sacred cup. His eyes are fixed on the stars. We follow their gaze.

Some of the torches have been extinguished : others flicker



*Bert*

*Paris*





faintly. But there is less light in the stars : the sky looks cold. The face of the night is pale. The high priest steps towards his Queen. Cléopâtre looks at the slave her love crowned King.

The hour has come.

“ You have learnt the mystery of Love : now you must learn the mystery of Death.”

The priest holds out the cup. Amoûn had forgotten. We, too, had forgotten.

He hesitates only long enough for memory to wound him. Then he takes the cup firmly in his two hands and he stands before his Queen and he looks into her eyes, and smiling, he drinks.

She smiles, too. The night has given the Serpent of the Nile the eyes of the dove ; but as Amoûn drops the cup to the ground and Death lays hands upon him, their expression changes, and we see the snake again looking out beneath the beautiful brows.

His agony is brief. Cléopâtre stands waiting. Her lips quiver : each muscle of her body responds to the agonised twitching of Amoûn's.

He falls. He rolls over : a thing misshapen and terrible. His body beats the ground : his fingers fight the air, find her feet. Then his head goes up and his eyes starting from their sockets seek her eyes.

He raises himself. His body is a candle-flame blown backwards and forwards. His arms cannot hold her, but his lips brush her neck, her chin. . . .

He is falling again. . . . Serpent-like her head shoots forward and her lips touch his an instant in advance of Death.

Amoûn is dead. The world is without a lover.

A shiver shakes the Queen's body. Of repulsion? Of satisfaction? Of delight? Who dares translate that last farewell? She turns her back on the clay and she stretches out her arms, and the negro, his loose lips grinning horribly, bends low on one side while the slave girl bows down on the other side.

And so Cléopâtre goes out from the night passing through the vast pillars of the temple into the dawn of the desert.

And they all follow her. The high priest is the last to leave. He looks at the dead man. He was young and beautiful. He covers the clay with a black cloth.

And now there is nothing left. Only the stones which make the temple and the hot sand of the desert and the green Nile silent in her bed. A veil covers her face. A thin miasma comes dancing with the dreadful dawn into the amphitheatre.

It is all over. We would tear ourselves away: fly, hide. But we cannot. Something is coming through the mist along the banks of the Nile.

The figure of a small woman: her head is bowed, her hands stretched out. She is searching.

She is coming towards the amphitheatre of the temple. She is beneath the pillars now. The stones mock her. They crush her. But she searches, everywhere. She looks like an animal hunting. Hunting for something without which it cannot live. Hunting, hunting for its mate. We would drive her away if we could find breath for speech.

She is standing in the middle of the arena now, where the Greek women danced and flung roses of passion. In another minute she will see it--the clay hidden by the black sheet.

Ta-hor, the little priestess, the minion with the fond, foolish eyes of an animal, the body of a flower and the hair of the





*Bert*

*Paris*

PAVLOVA.  
FOKINE.

night. She sees it. Her body grows rigid an instant; a slow frightened step forward, and another. Then with a rush she flings herself down, lifts up the black pall and finds Death—and she sought Amoûn. She turns the body over.

It is Amoûn.

She clasps him in her arms, she speaks to him. He will not open his eyes, he will not speak to her. He is faithless. She twines her fingers in his hair, her breath is hot on his face. She pleads with him. She curses him.

She lifts him up, and it is a lump of clay she presses to her breast.

It is almost more than we can bear. We see the warm brown body shiver and shrink. She tears the fillet from her raven hair and it falls lank and desolate about her shoulders. Her face is wet with the sweat of agony.

She bruises her breasts. She would tear out her heart.

A little wind comes whispering over the desert bringing with it the red of the rising sun. The body of Ta-hor takes human shape again, becomes infinitely tender. With hands outstretched, palms invoking the peace of the gods, she slowly bends her head until it is on a level with Amoûn's, who was and is not.

And her lips find his and with a kiss they take away the bitterness of Death and the sting of the Serpent and give peace. It is finished. The curtains fall. Come away.

*Fuyons ensemble, et si des roses fleurissent dans notre cité, cueillons les pour Fokina, tressons une couronne de laurier que nous déposerons aux pieds de Fédorova et Adolph Bolm; et ceignons Astofewa, Niginsky et tous leurs compagnons de guirlandes de myrte, suavement odorant.*









*Bert*

*Paris*

NIJINSKI.  
KARSAVINA.

# LE SPECTRE DE LA ROSE.

From a Poem by GAUTIER.

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*Adapted by VAUDOYER.*

*Music by WEBER.*

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La Jeune Fille . . . . .	KARSAVINA
Le Spectre de la Rose . . . . .	NIJINSKY

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Soulève ta paupière close  
Qu'effleure un songe virginal,  
Je vois le spectre d'une rose  
Que tu portais hier au bal.  
Tu me pris encore emperlée  
Des fleurs d'argent de l'arrosoir.  
Et parmi la fête étoilée  
Tu me promenais tout le soir.

O toi qui de ma mort fus cause,  
Sans que tu puisses le chasser,  
Toute la nuit un spectre rose  
A ton chevet viendra danser.  
Mais ne crains rien, je ne réclame  
Ni messe, ni *De profundis*  
Ce léger parfum est mon âme  
Et j'arrive du Paradis.

Mon destin fut digne d'écrire :  
Pour avoir un trépas si beau  
Plus d'un aurait donné sa vie,  
Car j'ai ta gorge pour tombeau  
Et sur l'albâtre où je repose  
Un poète avec un baiser  
Ecrivit, ci-gît une rose  
Que tous les rois ont jalouée.

—*Théophile Gautier, 1837.*

**I**T is not yet dawn. The darkest hour of a summer night, the hour when the realities of life sleep and dreams awaken and hold brief sway.

It is very quiet. Through the open French windows we can just see the garden as if it, too, were a dream garden : it

is full of shadows which, if we watch closely, seem to move, to come and go, as though the souls of the trees and the flowers and the grass had been set free to wander and to play beneath the stars.

The music is soft and tender, the music of leaves and blossoms and perfumes.

And presently the girl enters her room: she creeps in from the darkness as if she were a little afraid of the candle-light. She has come from the ball and she is tired and Sleep is pressing his fingers upon her eyes: they are full of the dreams of youth. And the dreams of love are there too.

She glances at the mirror on her dressing-table and then at her cool white bed. Both invite her, both have dreams to offer. She hesitates, then she raises to her lips a red rose which Love and the Night gave her at the ball.

And with its perfume she draws memory into her heart and a vision is conjured, altogether vague and tender and delicious, half real, half ideal. She sinks into a chair and bends over the rose which her lover gave her and which awoke in her heart a memory sweeter than she knew even he possessed.

A memory or a dream—she scarcely knows which. Her limbs relax, a little smile of content parts her lips. She is so tired. But it is too late to sleep, too early to rise. It is the hour of imagination and memory. For only the body is weary, the soul is wide, wide awake. She presses the rose close against her face.

Outside in the garden the shadows are moving more swiftly: in spite of the black night they begin to take shape and substance. And they have voices, and we know that all the flowers and trees are dancing as an hour ago she danced at the

ball; and they are whispering and singing, and their music drifts nearer.

The girl slips back into the arms of her chair and her head rests against the cushions and her hands fall limply by her side, and the red rose she holds drops upon the ground.

But its petals have stained her cheeks and its perfume has filled her heart, and only her body is asleep.

Her soul awakes and memory grows clearer as its vision expands, and the dream a young man gave her when he held her in his arms grows great and bright.

And now our eyes are fixed upon the garden we see through the open windows. And though it is still quite dark we can see clearly. The night is full of sound and full of love, full of flowers and perfume and music. And the air is still, and in spite of the music there is a great silence. We are conscious of the wind outside blowing things forgotten into our hearts.

Suddenly it rises triumphantly. And from the garden through one of the windows is blown the spirit of the rose. And as it floats to the ground it takes the shape and substance of a young man. It is virile yet spiritual. If we dared touch it, it would disappear. It is not real, one is not sure whether it is flesh or flower or something formed of the earth or of the sky. Yet watching it we feel that we are the shadows. It is the dream born of the perfumed memory which fills the heart of the girl who sleeps in her chair—and yet while she sleeps, awakes.

The spirit of the garden and the song of the night have entered her bedroom, and the wind blows this rose-spirit to and fro. It is love in human shape : now he hovers above the sleeping figure, caressing : now he is dancing just in front of

the window. And we dare not breathe lest by so doing the air is stirred to drive him back into the moving shapes outside. But he rises on the arms of the wind, he crouches beside the girl. And then she is awake too, really awake and in his arms; the love dream of a ballroom realised. The chair is empty now, yet one sees a shadow still resting there. The white bed waits, but the girl and her love-dream dance to and fro. The flesh no longer chains their limbs or holds them to the earth. The air is theirs, and they dance upon it and float on it: meet to embrace, part to pursue or be pursued. The trees and the flowers in the garden beyond are bending their heads to watch. The music of the night has entered the room, languid music like water which these two spill as they dance to and fro, until our eyes being open we can see as well as hear music.

The miracle is so brief that we scarcely realise it before it has gone. But they were chords and harmonies, these two spirit shapes floating on the implacable air: hands and feet, arms and legs, lips and eyes spilling and spelling each note of music.

The hour has passed. Jealous dawn lays his fingers on the night. The shadows in the garden grow quiet and sombre again. Time stands still for an infinitesimal space. The girl is in her chair again. The spirit of the rose hovers like love with trembling wings above her.

Silent the night outside. The candles flicker, a sudden gust of wind rises with a scream, pouring through the window by which Love entered, and like a leaf caught in the storm it lifts in his arms this spirit-man, the rose-dream of a girl's heart, and carries him swifter than the eye can follow out through the other window, out into the garden, the darkness and the silence.

The dream has gone and the girl opens her eyes. All has

gone that she thought real. Her large sleep-laden eyes search the room. She is alone.

And then she remembers—or is it perhaps that she forgets? At her feet a faded red rose : stooping, she picks it up and she raises it to her face. The perfume is still there and the Memory. But the room is empty, and only the dawn looks through the window. She turns to her white bed ; that is empty too.

But perhaps if she lays the rose upon the pillows when she closes her eyes the Dream will return and hold her in his arms again?









*Bert*

*Paris*

# LE PAVILLON D'ARMIDE.

*Pantomime Ballet by ALEXANDRE BENOIS. Music by TCHEREPNIN.*

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Armide . . . . .	Mme. TAMARA KARSAVINA
Le Vicomte de Beaugency . . . . .	MM. ADOLF BOLM
Le Marquis . . . . .	CECCHETTI
L'Esclave d'Armide . . . . .	NIJINSKY
Baptiste, domestique du Vicomte . . . . .	GRIGORIEV
Confidentes d'Armide . . . . .	{ Mmes. TCHERNICHEVA NIJINSKA SCHOLLAR VASSILEVSKA
Un Maître des Cérémonies . . . . .	MM. JEAN KOUSSOV
Premier Bouffon . . . . .	ROSAY

---

A STORY of magic. Yet there is less mystery in this Ballet than in any of the others.

The scene : an annexe of Le Pavillon d'Armide, the castle of a certain Marquis who is a magician. It is night : winds blow and rock the tree tops, rain streams through the air and thunder rolls.

The Vicomte de Beaugency is making a visit to the woman who has won his heart, finds himself close to the Marquis's castle and takes refuge there from the weather. The magician is only too glad to offer him hospitality and puts Le Pavillon d'Armide at his disposal.

We feel at once there is something strange and uncanny about this pavillon. Facing us is the Gobelin tapestry representing the beautiful Armide : beneath it, a great clock

supported by Love and Time. The Vicomte as soon as he is alone does not retire to rest, but sits down and gazes, fascinated, at the tapestry. Already he is under the spell of the famous beauty which, like the spell of Cléopâtre, death has failed to destroy.

He falls asleep. At the stroke of midnight the figures of Love and Time step down from the clock. Love drives Time away, and then all the little Hours come tripping out from the great clock, and one by one dance into the storm of the night.

And Armide lives again and holds her court. But one, Rinaldo, is missing; the Vicomte takes his place and Armide embraces him.

And now a revel of dancing and music. Time is not nor place. It is all a fantasy; nothing is real. The picture we see is as far away as if we were staring through the wrong end of a telescope. In spite of the music and the dance everything seems oppressed with the weight of silence. Slaves come and go, brave men and fair women dance and flirt, guests feast and drink, yet nothing is real. Though the music be sad or gay it is bloodless. The music of enchantment, yet it is but the reflection of sound.

Even when the buffoons come twisting and twirling upon the scene, executing strange and wonderful steps, we know they are only mirrored jests and we are almost afraid to laugh.

They are all under the spell of magic: and the hour will soon come when these delightful fantasies will fade away into sleep-land again—all save one, the Vicomte. For him there will be an awakening.

But presently the Magician himself, disguised as the King, approaches, and uniting the Vicomte and Armide blesses their union.





*Bert*

*Paris*

Slowly the scene fades away: the hours come trooping back. Time triumphs over Love and they return to their places. Thread by thread the Gobelin tapestry is woven afresh before our eyes, and we see the Vicomte as we left him, asleep in the Pavillon.

It is morning: the storm has passed. The Marquis-Magician enters chuckling to himself. The Vicomte awakes and recognises him as the King he has seen in his dreams.

And there lying across the hands of Time he finds the scarf which Armide gave him, the pledge of her love. He clasps it to his breast, he covers it with kisses. He rushes up to the tapestry—then terrified he tries to escape.

But he cannot shake off the spell. Holding in his arms his *gage d'amour*, he falls lifeless at the feet of the Magician.

A phantasy. A poem in pantomime. A dance dream. Beautiful but bloodless; a little resting-place on the march the Russian Dancers have led us over the mountain peaks of Emotions.









*Bert*

*Paris*

# SCHÉHÉRAZADE.

By BAKST and FOKINE.

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*Music by RIMSKY-KORSAKOV.*

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Zobéide . . . . .	TAMARA KARSAVINA
The Favourite Negro of Zobéide .	NIJINSKY
Schahriar, King of India and China	ADOLF BOLM
The Grand Eunuch . . . . .	CECCHETTI
Odalisque . . . . .	SOPHIE FÉDOROVA

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THERE is a suggestion of storm in the opening bars of the overture. There is a suggestion of terror in the Panel disclosed when the curtains part.

It is barbaric, this decorative drop scene of Serov's; it is insolent too. It might be the work of a child, a child who has visited the Never-Never Land, that country more strange and vast than the Russian Empire itself, the gates of which are always fastened against those who have reached the age of indiscretion.

Yet this enormous Panel with its impossible mountains, vast precipices, and terrifying figures tucked away in barren crevices, prepares us for the choreographic prelude of The Thousand and One Nights.

And if you gaze long enough at this Panel and listen to Rimsky-Korsakov's music—which if you are in London will

be impossible unless your neighbours are polite enough to carry on their conversation in under-tones—you will remember and recognise the fantastic scene as illustrating a dream you dreamed perchance when you were a child, your brain steeped in fairy-lore.

The overture, if you are fortunate enough to hear it, is all too short. It is quick, hot, restless music, the brass and the string instruments seem to be warring one against the other. Mere brutal passion striving against voluptuous dreams. It is eager, it is passionate until it becomes cruel.

A knocking at a locked door; a striving to clutch forbidden fruit.

And then brass and wind and string unite in a triumphal orgy. A pause wherein to take one's breath. The curtains fall, to rise almost at once upon the inmost shrine of King Schahriar's harem.

For a brief space but one of our senses is left us. The sense of sight. The others are drowned in a sea of colour. Sunshine has never entered this vast hall, but the cunning magicians of the East have stolen his beams and poured them like wine into this palace of the Sultan. And the world outside the encircling walls is grey and cold in comparison.

At first, sight reels, drunk with delight. Memory comes to our aid again and we remember this perfumed chamber. Some of us saw it but ten, others twenty or forty years ago when one night a woman closed a magic book and with a kiss sent us speeding to the country of a Thousand Nights.

There, facing us, are the great bronze and silver and gold doors, the alarming key-holes. We dare not contemplate what lurks behind these doors, yet the curiosity of childhood makes us long to open them. On the right vast arches and alcoves

half hidden : divans holding a tangle of white limbs. On the left alcoves again, broad staircases which, if we mounted, we feel would carry us no whither. A gallery running above a row of divans.

And all these are littered with women. As we recover the five senses which for a moment were drowned in the ocean of colour, we realise that every corner and alcove and staircase contains sleeping women.

Wives of the Sultan : indolent, beautiful, weary with the languor of their walled-in world. Women of the harem : like children these, eager, restless as the music : long-limbed and supple. The colours of their clothes burn their restless bodies : every muscle and tendon responds to the music which now drifts aimlessly, rising and falling on the heavy scented air. They cannot walk, they run to and fro seeking amusement where there is none, mocking the silence with laughter born of happy ennui.

Love is their portion, joy is their desire. The former like the wind comes from whence, and goes whither, they neither know nor care : the latter they find in themselves. The secrets of the mirror, their reflection in the marble baths, the caress of the water when they float upon it, the monotonous yet elusive music of string and cymbal and drum. And the unholy mystery of the sealed bronze and silver gates.

There, love and joy are locked away. What else?

When they are not hiding in the waters of the baths they bathe their bodies in burning colours of draperies cunningly devised. Their flesh might be marble set with precious stones ; silken scarves, opaque and as variegated as the rainbow, are wound round their bodies and tightly bind supple limbs which nevertheless refuse to be denied their freedom.

## 72 THE STORIES OF THE RUSSIAN BALLET.

They are not clothed except with colour. They are children revelling in the one good thing they know the gods have given them. They are beautiful, and they are glad. They only know emotions as soft, as elusive, as implacable as sea-foam; and like sea-foam they are tossed and driven hither and thither, little curving iridescent balls; uniting, dividing—and a wave leaps up and they are no more.

While these barbaric children are at play Schahriar, their King and lord, enters with Zeman, his brother. They are magnificent, these two men, but in spite of their strength and beauty they are effeminate and at sight of them the flesh creeps.

At their presence the vast hall quivers and trembles with fluttering draperies and white limbs. Countless pairs of eyes black as night and kohl-stained peer into their lord's face, coquetting fearfully. As many red-stained lips whisper love and adulation, and white bodies stained with scarves and silks of a thousand colours curve and twist around the motionless figure of the King. We who have forgotten the beauty and joyousness of the human body are shocked: we who perhaps vaguely remember, feel again the old enchantment and sit like worshippers in some great cathedral. Only our incense rises from the full red womb of life, ascending straight to the blue heaven of happiness; it is not lit on the tomb of dead desires rising but to be beaten back by a forbidding, blood-stained spire hiding earth from sky and builded by the fearful fingers of unnatural men.

Yet, even as thoughts such as these assail us, fear follows swift in their train, fear first suggested by the overture and Serov's Panel. The King is ill at ease, suspicious. He takes no heed of soft or languid looks. His Queen, the Queen of all women, stands aloof hiding by one of the alcoves.



The brothers exchange confidences. Two men and monarchs in a world of women, a world which seems slipping from their grasp. These children of delight who curl and cower at their feet, kissing, dancing, embracing—what secret do these painted lips and kohl-stained eyes withhold?

Suddenly the King announces that he is going hunting. Like a flock of birds in a cage the women flit to and fro: all is bustle, excitement. Some bring his belt of beaten gold, others fasten it for him. He stands like a figure carved of stone. Once the thick lips part in an unnatural smile.

They are very eager to speed him, these caged loves. The sensual, cruel eyes fix themselves first on one, then on another, as with white and henna-stained fingers they fasten his armour and attend to his wants.

Then he turns to go. He glances at the bronze and silver gates, signals to the chief eunuch, looks at his Queen. She then is faithful? Her farewell is dignified, cold.

The men depart. The silence is torn by a blare of trumpets. There is a whirl of women as they leap and bound towards the pillars. The clanging of gates, and they are alone. For the moment we hear the beating of a hundred curious and tender hearts. They are free though imprisoned: what mischief is at hand?

Cecchetti, the grand eunuch, busy about nothing, patters across the palace hall, foolish laughter bubbling from his soft, fat face. In an instant he is the centre of a ring of dancing women. They mock him, they tease him. And he laughs and laughs and wriggles stupidly.

The pretty fools, what would they with him? He tries to escape, breaks through one ring of colour and tangled limbs to

find another. Mischief in the air, aye. But for him the kitchen's call; food and wine, not women.

Cecchetti must dance! This mountain of unvirile flesh dance! The great brass keys jangle at his side, a score of lovely arms are wound around him. With smothered cries of joy a dozen women break away. They have the keys of the bronze and silver doors. Too late Cecchetti discovers his loss and the flabby face grows like clay: he seizes the pretty thieves just in time: they cling to him and fasten on him like bees buzzing round a hive.

"Open the gates of mystery. The silver gate . . . Then this great gate of bronze?" The King is away hunting, the day is long. But life is short, and youth born to-night dies to-morrow.

Oh, but he is beautiful and clever, this Cecchetti. Cleverer than the King himself. Let him mock the King.

And lo, the key rattles in the great lock and the bronze gate swings open. Heavy copper curtains hide the entrance.

The women scatter, timid yet exultant. And then like magic out leaps a horde of negroes clothed in copper. A vision of ebony skins and white teeth and outstretched arms. They swoop through the palace hall, pounce hawk-like on the laughing, trembling women and bear them away in a frenzied dance.

The Queen stands alone beneath the shadow of her alcove, watching. Other women are circling round the terrified Cecchetti now. He weeps and wrings his hands helplessly: but the great silver gate swings open, and again from hidden gloom spring out men black as night, these clothed in gleaming silver. The music rises to crescendo: the wind instruments fanning the brass to

a frenzy that dominates the entire orchestra rolling up like a red flame.

The eye is drunk again with swift colour, and motion swifter still. Our senses reel. It is no stage play or picture that we see. We are in the hands of a magician who has taken us away, and we are truly in Bagdad, and this orgy of Arabia is real and terrible.

It is useless with fumbling fingers to grasp the sides of your seat. It is in vain you try to wrench your eyes and drag back your spirit from this Arabian night. You may chain your body to your seat in the theatre: you yourself, the soul and spirit of you, have already left the little dividing space. London and its civilised millions are a dream now. This blaze of colour and music, this mass of flesh and blood burning in a mighty palace are alone real.

You are in the midst of it all, terrified perhaps but exultant. You pray God you will never go back—though at that moment perhaps the devil of the English gutters whispers that Bow Street police court is not a hundred yards away.

Colours gleam and glow, limbs white and black writhe and shine from alcove and divan. But the Queen of the harem stands alone before the last door, and with an imperious gesture bids the trembling Cecchetti open it. She does not beg, she commands; and he, terror pouring from every pore in his skin, grovels at her feet.

“It is death, it is death,” he whimpers.

“It is life, it is life. Open!”

The last gate is opened and there leaps high into the air the favourite of Zobéide. Like a bullet from a catapult he whirls through the air. The black arms and legs writhe like snakes as he lands upon the ground, and turning sees the Queen he

loves. He flings back his head and stretches out the palms of his hands. Another leap and he is at her side. She stands like an aspen quivering from head to foot. He does not touch her but he laughs and laughs.

He is mad with joy and freedom and love. Suddenly the lithe black body straightens, the muscles tighten. High into the air he springs to fall like thistle-down upon an empty divan in an alcove far distant.

The Queen Zobéide stands waiting, and after we have looked at her we never see another woman.

The music is rising again; string and wind and brass calling, commanding. The lover of the Queen is by her side and her eyes shine more brightly than the gold of his garments. His hands like the wings of a bird caress her without touching her. And once more he is away, his movements are too quick for the eye. At a signal all the lovers rise from their couches: dancing women rush pell-mell into the hall until it becomes one great kaleidoscope of colour.

They are all dancing, these men and women. They do not dance to music, but with music. The music is in their eyes and lips: in their trembling breasts; it falls from their hands and feet. It becomes music visualised. We can see it as well as hear it. And now we are conscious of feeling it. It is hot like fire: it is soft and sweet and subtle like flesh. It is red. It is purple like the colour of night, and the glory of dawn.

We cannot see what is happening now. We are drowning in this frantic storm-tossed ocean, wherein the bodies of men and women the colours of the rainbow and the music of the forests and rivers are united in an orgy of insane delight. What is going to happen? Something must happen. And soon.

Something terrible.



*Bert*

*Paris*



It comes. The terror. The King has returned.

The waves of the human ocean subside, fall, disappear. The King raises his hand, his lips are drawn back from his teeth, wolf-like. He does not speak. There is no need to speak. There is nothing to say. Men with scimitars rush on. There is only to kill.

The women are flying to and fro. They cling to the vast pillars, they cower in alcoves, they creep along the galleries, they crawl up the staircases which lead nowhither. There is no escape from the prison.

The slaying commences, swift, silent and terrible. So swift, it is all over at once. One by one the soldiers return wiping their swords.

Queen Zobéide stands beside her outraged lord. She opens her arms which he dreamed held only love for him. She at least is faithful?

Her hands touch him, cling to him, creep up his body, his neck, caress his face. She alone is left, he cannot lose her.

She was faithful? Yes, she swears it.

But the King's brother steps forward and with his foot turns over the dead body of the negro clothed in gold, the lover of the Queen.

A dozen daggers are raised to pierce the royal breast where love but lately plunged his arrows.

But Zobéide's imperious hand takes from a soldier his poniard. She walks to the side of her lord and facing him she drives the steel blade into her heart. And she falls at his feet.

The King looks up, looks through the gloom of the great palace hall. And everywhere, everywhere are dead women.

The women he loved but who could not be faithful to him.



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He is alone in the great prison house of love with only his soldiers and their swords still dripping blood.

And he looks at the dead Queen at his feet. She was more to him than all the women in his world.

He covers his face with his cloak, his body is shaken with grief.

The curtain falls. The Night is over.





Bert

Paris

Tamara Karpavicius

# L'OISEAU DE FEU.

(COLISEUM THEATRE, 1909.)

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*Music by TSCHAIKOWSKY.*

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L'Oiseau de Feu	. . . .	KARSAVINA
L'Oiseau d'Amour	. . . .	KOSLOFF

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THE music is suggestive of wind in the trees and the leaves are clapping their hands. Presently we hear the chattering of the birds . . . and though the water still drips from our umbrellas and even the good English leather of our boots has failed to resist the continued onslaughts of an English spring, yet we know that summer is here, blowing miraculously across the stage of the theatre.

And as the music rises the wind sings to the piping of the birds; we forget the smoke-laden atmosphere, the inevitable limelight of the music-hall and the damp umbrellas of our neighbours. We feel the wind beating our face, the blood quickens in our veins, a glow of expectation warms us. The stage is still empty but already imagination and music have transformed the painted wings and backcloth into a sun-lit forest.

We do not know who is coming, yet instinctively before she appears our heart warns us that it is the little flame-coloured bird L'oiseau de feu.

So, breathless, we wait. The wind sighs through the trees, then a sudden gush rushes across the grass conjured before our eyes, flower-perfumed, and lo! borne on its bosom, Karsavina,

the timid bird, wings outstretched and trembling. Only a short distance does the wind carry her, then she alights like blown thistledown among the waving grasses her seeking feet have found.

An instant's hush; chatter of feather folk and whisper of wanton breeze are silenced. She raises her head, peers right and left.

"Who follows . . . sweet? Who follows?"

She spreads her wings . . . we scarce dare breathe lest we fright her away: we sink deep into our seats lest those timid eyes, searching the glade, find and fear us.

But no . . . she only sees L'amour, her mate, pursuing. A short flight across the buttercups and daisies which raise their faces to catch the kisses of her feet; their petals are scarcely stirred by the gentle moither of her feathers.

To and fro she flits, limbs and quivering feet arched and wings curved coquettishly as the wind, grown bold, wantons with her.

The eye can scarce follow her flight—so swift, so short, so sudden. And now He, her mate, has dropped from the tree top and is pursuing. They meet, embrace . . .

She rises, hovers an instant with wings fanning his face. Then away in the arms of the wind, alighting a distance off, with shining eyes peering roguish timidity—inviting his further caresses, daring him to advance. Her flaming wings are folded across her white breast, beating like sea-foam from the breast of the sea.

Ah, he has her now! And all the little birds from their nests aloft laugh softly. For she makes no struggle to escape, but poised on one slender limb, flower-like among the flowers, she turns to him. An instant only they embrace again—then,

as if at the call of the forest music she flies away. And he, grown bold, follows.

But she is afraid. She cannot escape; a cloud hides the sunshine and the trees stretch out their arms and bar the way, making of the strip of meadow-land a cage.

Vainly she beats her wings against the wooden bars; frantically she flies up and down, to and fro; but her feathers as they stir the air make sweet music still; in the shadows they awaken flames, and scatter, star-like, golden kingcups on the grass.

At last, vanquished, she alights against the fence far away, almost hidden from sight; folding her quivering feathers about her body, bending her frightened little head to the earth.

“Swee—et . . . sweet—I am afraid.”

But the bold bird who followed hovers overhead.

“Sweet! It is Love who follows—have no fear.”

Still she trembles, her white breast shaken as water by the tempest; her lover swoops beside her now—takes her in his arms.

The wind sighs softly overhead—swee-et! the birds in the branches pipe gently. But L'oiseau de feu rises; she shakes her wings, and her eyes glance brightly into the eyes of her mate. She is no longer shy or afraid.

A sudden whirl as of many wings; a burst of music; a flutter of flame and feather. They swoop toward us, these two, beckoning us to follow in their flight; the sunlight once again blazes and the perfumed breeze blown by their wings is warm on our faces. Instinctively we half open arms, dreaming they might nestle awhile with summer in our hearts . . .

But in an instant they are gone—*le petit oiseau de feu* and her mate. And the curtain falls and we find ourselves once more

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in the Coliseum—trampling on the still wet umbrellas of our neighbours.

And so out into St. Martin's Lane, out into the mud and the rain of our fickle English summer, out into the noise of the streets.

But now we care neither for the clouds that encompass us nor for the moisture spurted at us beneath the chariots of the Mighty. For we hold fast against our breast, unseen by mortal eyes, a little bird, exquisitely plumaged, still dancing her song of summer into our hearts—Karsavina, l'oiseau de feu.







*Bert*

*Paris*

# PRINCE IGOR.

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## POLOVTSIENNE DANCES.

*Arranged by FOKINE.*

*Music by BORODIN.*

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Général polovtsien .	M.	ADOLF BOLM.
Filles polovtsiennes .	Mmes.	SOPHIE FÉDOROVA, SCHOLLAR, NIJINSKA, VASSILEVSKA, TCHEREPANOVA, TCHERNISHEVA, GONSIOROVSKA, REISEN, FROMANN, BARONOVITCH I., BARONOVITCH II., IEZERSKA, ELPE.
Esclaves . . . .	Mmes.	GASHEVSKA, A. VASSILIEVA, BIBER, KONETZKA, KOPETZINSKA, M. VASSILIEVA, KLEMENTOVITCH, HOHLOVA, MIETCHKOVOSKA, LASTCHILINA, LARIONOVA, HEINE, JULITZKA, SAZONOVA, KANDINA, GULIUK, KULCHITZKA,
Guerriers polovtsiens .	MM.	FEDOROV, RAKHMANOV, V. ROMANOV, DMIETRIEV, KOBELV, SERGHEIEV. PETROV, SEMENOV, VARJINSK, ZAILICH, S. MOLOTSOV, UMANSKY, CHRISTAPSON, OGNEV, ORLIK, LAROV.
Adolescents . . .	MM.	ROSAY, LEONTIEV, ORLOV, KREMNIÉV, B. ROMANOV, KOTCHETKOVSKY.

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**W**HAT emotion is left for these Russian Dancers to portray? What story have they left untold? What song have limbs, lips and eyes left unsung?

They have given us love in Cléopâtre, every phase of the

greatest of emotions; love egoistical, love sacrificial. Love laughing and love weeping, love passionate, love spiritual.

In Schéhérazade they painted with colours, flame-like, distrust and revenge. In *Le Carnaval* sweet folly. Mystery in *Le Pavillon d'Armide*. Romance in *Le Spectre de la Rose*. And in *Les Sylphides*, Youth dancing among the ruins of Age.

Joy, terror, shame, hope, happiness.

What then is left?

War! In Prince Igor the lust of battle, the exaltation of victory.

The scene is taken from the second act of Borodin's opera. Needless to say the dances are arranged by Fokine the genius.

An encampment of Polovtsis, who have defeated the Slavs and taken prisoner Prince Igor and his son Vladimir. It is evening: the sun has just disappeared, blood-red, and the vast plain stretching into infinity is soaked with the colour of war. The atmosphere is heavy, filled with the silence which always precedes and follows a storm.

Stretched here, stretched there, stretched everywhere the bodies of men: they have thrown themselves down anywhere; some to sleep, some to smoke, some to dream of that last great hand-to-hand encounter.

They have celebrated their victory in food and wine, and the camp fires are smoking lazily, flames are dwindling. They cast a kindlier glow than that the sun gave ere he disappeared from sight.

Every minute the twilight fades and the sky grows darker and the plain more vast and more mysterious.

Now figures move about the edge of the encampment. Women coming and going.

The music rises, quivering impatiently through the air.

Somewhere a woman is singing: a love song. It is Kontchatovna, the Kahn's daughter. She sings of her love for Vladimir, the prisoner.

Presently the night watch is heard. We see women passing and repassing, far and near: their faces gleam in the dying light of the camp fires. Their clothes look as if they had been coloured by sunshine and star-light and storm.

Vladimir has joined the Kahn's daughter and he confesses his love.

Presently the Kahn himself comes to see what his prisoners are doing: he treats Prince Igor with deference, almost humility; offers to set him free if he will never fight against him again. The Prince says no word, and the Kahn understands his silence.

Of all the gods the God of War is the last he will desert. The Kahn salutes his prisoner and sends for his slaves, commanding them to dance before Prince Igor and his son.

The camp fires are replenished. The light of many flames gleams through the encampment. The music becomes hot and restless. Soldiers awake, bestir themselves, watch the dance. Now the women join it: their spotty-coloured petticoats rise with the smoke, whirl with the flames, make vivid blots of colour here, there and everywhere.

Suddenly a score of Polovtsien warriors hurl themselves among the dancers, waving in the air their bows and arrows. The women close round them, dance back again, sink to the ground.

The music is threatening. Women commence to sing snatches of a strange song, at first languorous, but quickly becoming barbarous. The bodies of the warriors who dance are like the bows they hold in their hands: their limbs resemble

the quivering strings. Their feet touch the earth and they rebound shooting like arrows through the air.

Wilder and quicker the music: fuller and more fierce the voices. The Polovtsien warriors are circling round their General like savages now. They move with mad yet measured steps. It is an incantation. War! Blood-thirsty, brutal, glorious.

Faster and faster they move, circle after circle, and right in the centre the General of the Polovtsien, leaping towards the sky, leaping higher than the flames, himself a flame, a cloud of smoke, a ball of fire tossed skyward to be hurled back to earth again.

He is beautiful and bloody; he is the Germ of destruction, the Spirit of Unrest. Higher rise the flames; quicker and hotter the music, wilder and more fierce the women's voices. The whole vast plain as far as the eye can reach seems to be alive with dancing warriors. They spring from the earth, they threaten the sky. Clouds of smoke drive among them with the fumes of battle and blood.

It is terrible but it is magnificent; it is barbarous, it is the alpha and omega of human existence; for it is war.

In another moment they will loosen arrows from their bows, pierce the stars and engage the gods themselves in mortal combat.

But night covers them with her mantle and the curtains close and we stumble out into Covent Garden and fill our lungs with the perfume of flowers.

And perhaps we realise why St. John found it necessary to write the Book of Revelation and tell us that there was war in heaven.







*Dover Street Studios*

*London*

PAVLOVA.  
MORDKIN.

# L'AUTOMNE BACCHANALE.

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*Arranged by MORDKIN.*

*Music by GLAZOUNOV.*

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ANNA PAVLOVA.

MICHAEL MORDKIN.

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WHEN contrasted with the Bacchic fury of Fokina in Cléopâtre, Pavlova's Bacchanale becomes the more remarkable.

Again we have the inspired music of Glazounov, music which can whip to fury, or bear us away on the arms of the wind to the orange groves of Ithaca where we may bask in the sunshine of love rather than be scorched by his flames.

The scene: a land of forests and flowers and blue skies. The grove is empty, filled only with soft sounds and the whispering of leaves which are rosy with the kisses of summer suns. Soon we hear her coming, the Dryad of the wood. Swift in pursuit a human—or is it Apollo and but ill-disguised as a shepherd? Superb in his strength, limbs fashioned like a god's yet as light and supple as a girl's.

And she, the wood-nymph? Oh, she is beautiful; redolent of the resinous woods, the virgin flowers of the forest: as timid as a fawn, as bold as the flame-eyed hawk. Clothed with sunbeams and shadows: her hair a cloud the stars have pierced: her lips, roses in full bloom. The orange trees have shed their wealth of blossoms for her breasts. Her long, slim limbs are as white and warm as froth from Ionian seas.

She has captured a little mist which was hovering over a pool in the forest, and she waves it above her head as her white feet skim the golden leaves dancing before her.

She tosses the sun-kissed cloud in her lover-shepherd's face. In an instant his arms are about her, and watching, we tremble lest in one fierce embrace the god consumes this perfumed breath of life.

But like a breeze made visible she curls through the encircling arms; brushes his breast, his face—and is away beyond his reach. He stands transfixed a moment.

Here is a thing as fragile as a thought and more elusive. A thing of flesh and blood, one can hand-grasp, two hands destroy; yet, be he man or god, he cannot capture it.

But he will fight. A god-like battle : strength pitted against beauty. Our hands are clasped in supplication lest they go.

He is after her ! There is no sound in the forest now : Aeolus holds his breath, birds and beasts are still and silent watching this sweet play of god and Dryad.

The summer is over; is she the last love left, the fairest of all the nymphs which made sport of mortals? Muddy imagination of modern man never conjured a vision as beautiful as this. Her finger-tips are kisses, her fragile body knows no restraint. We thought she feared her shepherd? They are locked in a mad embrace, dancing together as the sea waves dance upon a golden shore, now high, now low. Now twining their limbs in the little cloud of mist she stole from the pond, now uniting in a breathless kiss; now dividing like the quivering waters of a turbulent stream. We thought we lived, we who watch. Alas, we only Remembered; and now, gazing into a mirror, we see all the hidden ways of life and love dropped like pearls and lost in the Ocean of Progress.

The music is rising, the autumn leaves are whirling beneath their feet. Their eyes are shining and their bodies glowing with love.

They are both caught in a tempest of emotions now. Neither can escape. We are glad there can be no escape.

Wilder, faster, sweeter.

She falls into his arms, hovers poised a moment like a bird. Then away leaping, bounding through the air. We open wide our arms to receive the quivering white body which swoops towards us. Too late. With one lion-like bound, a flame of passionate fire, he is upon her.

She is conquered.

She flings up her arms in an ecstacy, and falls, like the implacable white mist she stole from the forest pool, and lies quivering at his feet a tangle of white limbs, black hair and rosy lips.







*Bert*

*Paris*

LES SYLPHIDES.



# LES SYLPHIDES.

By M. FOKINE.

---

*Music by CHOPIN.*

*Orchestrated by GLAZOUNOV, LIADOV, TANEIEV, SOKOLOV, and STRAVINSKY.*

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- Nocturne . . . Mme. KARSAVINA ; M. NIJINSKY ; Mmes. WILL, SCHOLLAR, NIJINSKA, FOKINA, VASSILEVSKA, VASSILIEVA, TCHEREPANOVA, BIBER, GASHEVSKA, YAKOVLEVA, GONSIOROVSKA, KULTCHITZKA, YESERSKA, JULITZKA, BARONOVITCH I., BARONOVITCH II., HEINE, KOPETZINSKA, MEITCHKOVSKA, KLEMENTOVITCH, GULIUK, HOHLOVA, KONIETZKA.
- Valse . . . Mme. KARSAVINA. Mazurka . . . M. NIJINSKY.
- Mazurka . . . Mme. NIJINSKA. Prelude . . . Mme. WILL.
- Valse . . . Mme. KARSAVINA and M. NIJINSKY.
- Valse Brillante . . . Mmes. KARSAVINA, WILL, and M. NIJINSKY.
- 

HERE there is no story to tell. You must be very old or very young to understand and appreciate this ballet. The characters are not human. They are just what we choose to make them. If you are very young they are ghosts in some secret, walled-in garden holding revel by moonlight. If you are very old they are spirits from the Unknown, the land towards which your face is already turned expectantly.

But if you have the misfortune to belong to well-fed Middle

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Age you had best turn to the programme, which rescues imagination in one brief line :

*“Amidst a scene of ruins a series of classical dances take place with no purpose but their musical and choreographic interest.”*

Even though we have dined not wisely but well and are already wondering where we shall take supper and whether the Ballet will be over in time, let us dare to be very young, just for an hour.

Let us leave our starched shirts, our tight shoes, our diamonds and our straight-fronted corsets in the stalls—no one will notice that we are not inside them (which perhaps is rather a sad reflection)—and, taking hands, let us crawl through the shadows into these delicious Ruins.

What a thrill we experience as we creep beneath the dark yews and cypresses. Ghosts and goblins used to lurk here, elves and pixies danced to uncanny music.

Hurry, hurry or they will be after us!

Now we are in the ruined courtyard, great boulders covered with moss and lichen block the way. We crush perfumed flowers beneath our feet. The wind stirs the cypresses, and the music we remembered comes again.

Draw closer, keep all together. Here was the banqueting hall. There, the tower where the Beautiful Lady was kept prisoner, and the Brave Man swam the moat and climbed right up to her bedroom window and rescued her. But before they could escape they were discovered and killed. They died in one another's arms and they were buried here in this open space of ground. And always at midnight they come back, and they dance and whisper and make love in the enchanted place.

Hush! What is that gleaming so white beneath the ruins?

A moonbeam? Perhaps, but we are not sure. A yellow moon is rising behind the battlements, but its light only makes the darkness darker, and the shadows are full of strange things.

There are moonbeams everywhere now. See, they take shape: pale faces crowned with hair like the night. Beautiful, sad eyes are peering at us, and white limbs are gleaming and dancing.

They thought they killed those lovers: they did not know that love is immortal.

The old castle is a mass of ruins, and the dreams men dreamed and all the spoils of war and the great chambers they filled with loot and the slaves they sold and the land they conquered and the gold they hoarded.

All has crumbled and been scattered far and wide. All is hidden beneath the stones and the grass and the flowers. And the little dead leaves laugh as they are blown about. They, too, are immortal, the little dead leaves, and they kiss the feet of the moonbeam maidens who are silently flitting to and fro, blown hither and thither by the music of the cypresses.

There, in the centre of them all, is the Beautiful Maiden, and here her Brave Lover. They meet, they embrace. He holds her in his arms: like thistledown she is blown high above his head, almost out of reach. He stands on tip-toe and catches her as she floats down to earth, and whirling round and round like one of the little leaves, falls safely in his arms again.

And now all the maidens who loved and were faithful and died for love, glide to and fro: white arms embrace the air. We know they hold other spirits which we cannot see. The moon rises higher in the sky: the night wind joins with the music and sings songs sad and tender, and slender limbs like beams of light weave dreams among the ruins.

When dawn breaks and daylight comes we shall, if we search, find them clinging to the old grey walls, or trembling among the ferns and bracken and flowers, silken cobwebs shining with tears of the night.

We are not afraid now. Youth knows no fear. We are in the land of enchantment, the land whose gates are locked and barred against schoolmaster and schoolmistress, priest and pedagogue.

Oh, that the night would last, that the cypresses would always make sweet music, that the Sylphides would always haunt the flower-strewn ruins; dancing and kissing, mingling white limbs and moonbeam bodies and stirring the little dead leaves, which, when they are still, cover the grave of Romance.

But see, the night grows pale, shivers and draws reluctantly away.

Quick, quick, back to your seats!—into your starched shirts, your tight shoes, and your dreadful corsets. Fasten your manacles of pearls and diamonds, and if you are in London hurry out quickly before the curtain falls or you may be too late to enjoy your cold grouse and your pint of Heidsieck.

*Ars longa, vita brevis.*



*Bert*

*Paris*









*Bert*

*Paris*

*Luna P. Lova*

## TWO PORTRAITS.

### I.

**H**AIR *COIFFÉ* with the fingers of the night while the wind was bringing dawn over the sea. And the wind has blown colours from the sea into her eyes : colours that change from grey to green, from blue to brown. Dawn has kissed her lips and mystery is upon her mouth veiled by a mist of desires. Her height is the span of a man's arms ; her body a spring of lily-grown water, her arms two little streams rippling from the fountain-head : each finger-tip a lover's kiss, and her feet the wings of a dove. Two white pillars of cloud, her legs, floating between sea and sky.

She is neither of heaven nor earth. She is the soul of the wind clothed with flesh and blood, and we call her Pavlova.

## II.

EYES like the windows of an Enchanted Palace the gates of which are locked. We may gaze through the open windows, but it is like looking into an ocean whose depth no man has plumbed; the longer we look, the deeper and the darker it grows until we draw back, afraid. Her lips are twin poppies which give sleep, and her hair is a mantle covering one who sleeps. Her face subtly shapen, Sorrow and Love the sculptors of a beauty *brune, rêveuse, matie*, tinged with melancholy. Terribly human, yet neither woman nor child. Her body is like a rose bursting from bud to blossom; one dare not touch her lest a petal be disturbed. She is a flower from that vast garden of strange growths, Russia.

In her heart, the perfumes of the Orient; in her richly-tinted petals the passionate warmth of the West; in her slender stalk—the flower-like limbs—the languor of the East: Tamar Karsavina, *la Rose de Russie*.



*Bert*

*Paris*

*Tamara Knitting*















